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III.

THE REFORMATION
IN FRANCE
II.

RICHARD HEATH.

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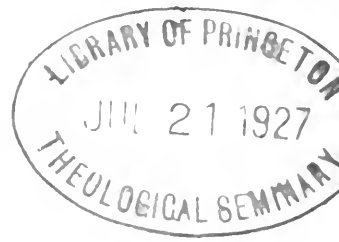
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The Church History Series

III



THE REFORMATION IN FRANCE

From the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes
to the Incorporation of the Reformed
Churches into the State

BY

RICHARD HEATH

*Author of 'The Reformation in France, from the Dawn of Reform to the
Revocation of the Edict of Nantes,' etc.*

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P R E F A C E .

THIS history, the earlier portion of which was narrated in a previous volume, is here brought to its natural conclusion in the Revolution of 1789. That that event was the necessary sequel of the Protestant Reformation has long been recognised; but for reasons easy to be understood it has not been fully and clearly brought out in histories dealing exclusively with the Reformation in France. Hence a certain sadness and perplexity, as if, after all its terrible struggles, after its long martyrdom of two centuries and a half, the Reformation in France had proved abortive and a failure.

The Bible teaches us that God regards nations as individual beings, having a continuous life in this world, a particular generation being brought into judgment for the sins of its predecessors (Matt. xxiii. 35, 36). This being so, it is impossible to suppose that the most stupendous event in French history—and, we may say, one of the most important in the history of Christendom—could have

been other than the natural sequence of the long-resisted movement for Reform. That movement was not confined to the ecclesiastical sphere alone, but extended to all that constituted the life of the nation. Against it all the vested interests of injustice and falsehood combined ; but when at last they appeared to have triumphed, the movement towards truth and justice broke out afresh, and proved at last a national effort. But, just as in the case of an individual man who has for long years resisted the cry of his conscience, the awakening proved most terrible, reason itself for a moment seeming to reel.

Seen in this light, the History of the Reformation in France is lifted out of isolation and perplexity into the great unity of universal history, filling the mind with light, joy, and hope, because it proves a kind of first-fruits of the ultimate triumph of righteousness, of the final reign on earth of justice and truth.

R. H.

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DATES USEFUL IN READING THIS HISTORY.

Revocation of Edict of Nantes	1685	Crusade proclaimed by	
Execution of Fulcran Rey	1686	Clement VI. against the	
Execution of Dalgues	1687	Camisards	1703
The Little Prophets of the		Great Storm	1703
Cevennes	1688-1689	Bossuet died	1704
Trial of the Seven Bishops	1688	John Locke died	1704
John Bunyan died	1688	Battle of Blenheim	1704
Landing of Prince of Orange		Treaty between Marshal	
at Torbay	1688	Villars and the Camisard	
Racine's <i>Esther</i> played at		Cavalier	1704
St. Cyr	1689	Death of Roland the Cami-	
William and Mary proclaimed	1689	sard Chief	1704
Insurrection in the Vivarais	1689	Five Camisard Prophets	
Execution of Berthezène and		executed	1705
Poisson	1689	The Camisard Salomon burnt	1706
Claude Brousson returns to		Battle of Ramillies	1706
France	1689	Two other Camisard prophets	
Toleration Act in England	1689	executed	1706
Execution of Gabriel Astier,		French defeated at Malpla-	
and of Dhombres	1690	quet	1709
Battle of the Boyne	1690	The prophet Claris executed	1710
Robert Barclay died	1690	The <i>Spectator</i> commenced	1711
George Fox died	1691	Prince Eugene defeated at	
Richard Baxter died	1691	Denain	1712
Battle of La Hogue	1692	Peace of Utrecht	1713
Executions of Vivens and		Queen Anne died	1714
two companions	1692	New Edict against Protest-	
Louis de Marolles died in		ants	1715
prison	1692	Fénelon died	1715
'Sighs of Enslaved France'		Louis XIV. died	1715
published	1694	First Synod of the Reformed	
Antoine Court born	1696	Churches held after the	
Peace of Ryswick	1697	Revocation	1716
Peter the Great in England	1698	Triple Alliance	1717
The Edict of the Revocation		Execution of the pastor	
confirmed	1698	Arnaud	1718
Execution of Claude Brousson	1698	Paul Rabaut born	1718
James II. died	1701	Charles XII. of Sweden	
Murder of the Archpriest of		killed	1718
the Cevennes	1702	Mississippi Scheme at height	1719
Insurrection in the Cevennes	1702	South Sea Bubble at height	1720
William III. died	1702	Plague at Marseilles	1720
Execution of the prophet		Regent Orleans died	1723
Séguier	1702	Draconian law of 1724	1724
Camisard War	1702-1704	George I. died	1727

Sir Isaac Newton died . . .	1727	First Assembly of Notables at Versailles	1787
Execution of the pastor Roussel	1728	Edict of Toleration	1787
Protestant Seminary founded at Lausanne	1729	States-General meet	1789
Execution of Pierre Durand	1732	The Deputies of the Third Estate declared themselves the National Assembly	1789
George III. born	1738	The Bastille taken	1789
Peace of Vienna	1738	Abolition of Feudalism	1789
National Synod	1744	Declaration of the Rights of Man	1789
Battle of Dettingen	1743	Civil Constitution of the Clergy	1790
England declared War against France	1744	Catholic Insurrection in the South of France	1790
Executions of the pastors Ranc and Roger	1745	The Pope condemns the Re- volution	1790
Battle of Fontenoy	1745	John Wesley died	1791
Battle of Culloden	1746	Constitution of 1791	1791
Execution of the pastor Matthieu Majal	1746	Legislative Assembly	1791-92
Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle	1748	The Prussian and Austrian Invasion of France	1792
Dr. Watts died	1748	The Convention	1792
Persecution increased	1750-55	Massacres in Paris. Sep- tember	1792
Dr. Doddridge died	1751	Trial and Execution of Louis XVI.	1793
Bishop Butler died	1752	The Revolutionary Tribunal established	1793
Execution of the pastor Benzet	1752	Marat Assassinated	1793
Earthquake at Lisbon	1755	War in La Vendée	1792-95
War declared between Eng- land and France	1756	Committee of Public Safety Execution of Girondists	1793
Battle of Plassey	1757	Lyons bombarded	1793
Quebec taken	1759	Reign of Terror	1793
Montreal surrendered	1760	Noyades at Nantes	1793
George II. died	1760	Worship of Reason	1793
The pastor Rochette exe- cuted	1762	Execution of Danton	1794
Jean Calas broken on the wheel	1762	Fête of the Supreme Being	1794
National Synod in Languedoc	1763	Execution of Robespierre	1794
Peace of Paris	1763	End of the Convention	1795
Order of Jesuits suppressed in France	1764	The Directory	1795-99
Oberlin became pastor of the Ban de la Roche	1767	Campaign in Italy	1796-97
Tumults at Boston, America	1768	Egyptian Expedition	1798-99
George Whitefield died	1770	The 18th Brumaire	1799
Louis XV. died	1772	Buonaparte, First Consul	1799
Voltaire died	1778	Buonaparte crosses the Alps Second Italian Campaign	1800
Rousseau died	1778	The Concordat	1802
French fleet totally defeated off Dominica	1781	The Reformed Churches in- corporated into the State.	1802
Cornwallis surrendered to Washington	1781		
United States acknowledged	1782		

THE REFORMATION IN FRANCE.

BOOK I.

*FROM THE REVOCATION OF THE EDICT OF
NANTES TO THE END OF THE
CAMISARD WAR.*

I.

THE SOURCE OF THE EVIL NARRATED IN THIS BOOK.

THE moral and material ruin wrought in France by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes has long been so manifest, that we are to-day lost in amazement at its folly. But at the time it was regarded as the height of wisdom. Madame de Sévigné, a person noted for extraordinary good sense, and one of the most respectable representatives of French society in the later part of the seventeenth century, writing in 1685 to the Comte de Bussy, says: 'You have doubtless seen the edict by which the king revokes that of Nantes. Nothing can be more admirable than its contents, and no king has done or ever will do a more honourable act.' To which the count replies: 'I admire the conduct of the king in destroying the Huguenots; the wars which have been waged against them before, and the St. Bartholomews, have multiplied and given vigour to this sect. His Majesty has gradually undermined it, and

the edict which he has just published, supported by dragoons and Bourdaloue,¹ has been its *coup de grâce.*'

That this was not the careless utterance of two people of the world who did not sufficiently consider what they were saying, is shown by the fact that the same note of praise comes in chorus from clever people like Mdlle. de Scuderi,² La Fontaine,³ La Bruyère,⁴ and Thomas Corneille;⁵ and still stronger expressions of approval from grave and serious men under the most grave and serious circumstances. The Chancellor of France, Letellier, was tottering on the verge of the tomb when he was called upon to affix the royal seal to the edict. His joy was so great that he is said to have used the words of Simeon: 'Now let Thy servant depart in peace: for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.' And Bossuet, preaching his funeral sermon shortly after, exclaimed, 'Take, take your sacred pens, ye who compose the annals of the Church! Hasten to place Louis XIV. with Constantine and Theodosius. . . . Let us raise to heaven our thanksgivings, and let us say to this new Constantine, to this new Theodosius, to this new Marcus, to this new Charlemagne, that which the six hundred and thirty Fathers assembled at the Council of Chalcedon said in former times: "You have strengthened the faith! You have exterminated the heretics! It is the

¹ Bourdaloue (1632-1704), preacher to the king, so popular that people crushed to hear him, belonged to the Jesuit Society.

² Mdlle. de Scuderi (1607-1701), famous novelist, one of the stars in the cultured society of the time.

³ Jean de la Fontaine (1621-1695), the famous fable-writer.

⁴ Jean de la Bruyère, author of *Les Caractères ou les Mœurs de ce Siècle* (1687); tutor to the dauphin under Fénelon.

⁵ Thomas Corneille (1625-1709), a dramatic poet, brother to the great Corneille.

worthy work of your reign. It is its peculiar character. Through you, heresy exists no more! God alone has accomplished this marvel! King of heaven, preserve the king of earth! This is the prayer of the Churches! this is the prayer of the bishops!"'

Nor was this a mere burst of eloquence. It was placing the capital on the column, the headstone on the building which this man of genius, at once an orator and a philosopher, had founded, as he thought, on Scripture itself. Bossuet was the divine most respected in France. His judgment was sound, his orthodoxy unimpeachable; he was the last man in the world to be suspected of fanaticism. Bossuet held no strange and peculiar ideas, but simply expressed in clear, powerful, and eloquent language the thought of France.

And that thought he unfolded in a book written for the instruction of the Duke of Burgundy, the expected future king of France. *Politics Drawn from Holy Scripture* was the title of the work, and if we study it we shall find the secret of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes and of the welcome that event received from the ruling classes in France.

Going to the foundation of society, Bossuet says all men are brothers, as children of the same God, and as having been made to spring from one root—Adam; that the earth was given to be the common property of mankind; and thus the Creator had arranged a perfect human society. But in consequence of the fall, selfishness has appeared. Each now seeks to please himself, and unity can only be attained by men submitting to one authority. This authority proceeds from God, and in its earliest form was paternal, but by popular consent and the force of arms it quickly took a regal form. Having thus shown the origin of the royal authority, the rest of

his book is devoted to magnifying its nature and importance. He not only affirms princes to be God's servants, and as such to have a sacred character, but he makes obedience to their will a matter of conscience. Bossuet is not only as much in favour of autocracy as Macchiavelli and Hobbes, but he seeks to plant its roots in the eternal royalty of God. He makes a religion of it, calling it, after Tertullian, the Religion of the Second Majesty. At the shrine of this religion he calls kings themselves to bow. 'Respect,' he says, 'your own purple; recognise the mystery of God in your persons. Be then gods to your subjects; that is to say, govern as God governs, in a manner noble, disinterested, Divine.' Princes ought not to render an account to any one of what they ordain; beyond them there is no appeal. They cannot even be constrained to do what they ought; all must proceed freely, voluntarily, and as it were of their grace. Outrageous impiety on the part of a prince, and even persecution of the true religion, does not exempt a subject from obedience; while, on the other hand, it is the duty of princes to employ their authority to destroy all false religions which spring up in their dominions.

Bossuet's *rôle* as the champion of Gallicanism may partly account for his high monarchism; he wanted to make the authority of the head of the State a counterpoise to the papal authority. But the pope looked with no friendly eye on this attempt to raise up an authority co-ordinate with his own, and in a material sense immensely more powerful. So the persecution of the Huguenots had met with little favour at the Vatican. Pope Innocent XI. had spoken quite righteously of the dragonnades; but the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes was an act so completely in harmony with the ideas and traditions

of Rome, that even in a foe it deserved praise and congratulation. It was the old story, ever new and ever true: 'And the same day Pontius Pilate and Herod were made friends, who before were at enmity.'

II.

SOWING THE WIND.

La messe, le prêche: these two words epitomise the character of the two religions which had so long struggled to dominate the conscience of France. The mass was the central point of all Catholic controversy, as liberty of prophesying summed up the whole Protestant contention. If we understand these two words, we shall understand the two religions, and shall see how radically different were their conceptions of Christianity. The one affirmed the clergy to be a sacrificing priesthood, the other declared that the chief duty of a minister of Jesus Christ was to proclaim the Word of God.

The very pretensions of the priests magnified in Catholic eyes the position of the Protestant pastorate. It was regarded as the citadel of the Reformed faith, which once destroyed would necessarily conclude the war. The main provisions of the Edict of Revocation were accordingly directed against the Protestant ministry; there was to be no more preaching of the Reformed faith in France, and all its pastors were ordered to leave the country in a fortnight.

The day on which the modern Nebuchadnezzar signed the decree, October 18th, 1685, the priests of the conquering Church were compelled to chant the praises of the faith they wished to curse, and to testify by all kinds of quotations from Scripture to

the supreme importance of a gospel ministry,¹ in which each individual received his commission directly from God,² and could not therefore restrain his lips to please human potentates, but was compelled at every risk to utter the truth³ committed to his charge,⁴ truth with which he might not tamper,⁵ it being the Word of God,⁶ containing the mystery of redemption,⁷ made known to holy men of old, who spoke with a divinely inspired knowledge,⁸ and that it was the work of this ministry to enforce their holy and sacred teaching,⁹ showing men that in obedience to it they would live, but in disobedience die.¹⁰

This is a faithful epitome of the teaching of the offices for St. Luke's Day, the festival on which, or the festival coming on the day after which, the decree for the Revocation of the Edict was signed, it not being quite certain whether Louis XIV. put his hand to this *arrêt detestable* on the seventeenth or eighteenth of the month.

Seven hundred pastors were immediately driven out of the country, the edict in one case being enforced with a rigour beyond its letter: Jean Claude, minister at Charenton, peculiarly obnoxious as a man of talent, character, and ability to lead, being

The following references to figures in the preceding text may be identified by any one curious to look up the offices for the festival of St. Luke in the old Paris Breviary, which will be found almost entirely composed from Scripture.

¹ Rom. x. 15; Eph. iv. 11, 12; Ps. lxxviii. 11; Isa. xl. 9; 2 Thess. ii. 14; Col. i. 5.

² Isa. xli. 27; Rev. x. 7; Eph. iv. 11, 12; Ps. lxxviii. 11; Eph. iii. 3, 4, 7. ³ Ps. xl. 9, 10; 1 Thess. ii. 4. ⁴ Eph. iii. 4.

⁵ 2 Cor. ii. 17; Baruch iv. 1; Ps. lxxviii. 5.

⁶ Ps. xii. 6, cxix. 140; Eph. iii. 3, 4.

⁷ Acts i. 2, 3; Luke i. 1-3; Eph. iii. 3, 4.

⁸ Heb. ii. 3, 4; Ps. lxxviii. 3, xlv. 1.

⁹ Heb. ii. 3, 4; Ps. ix. 11; 1 Thess. ii. 8; Phil. i. 27.

¹⁰ Rom. ii. 10; Heb. ii. 3, 4; Josh. i. 8; Ps. cxix. 130.

compelled to depart in twenty-four hours, escorted to the frontier by one of the king's footmen. The other pastors of Paris were allowed two days, and those of the provinces a little longer; but the vicegerent of heaven at Versailles would not allow them to take any of their children over seven years, and in some cases babes at the breast had to be given up. Not a single pastor was permitted to remain, even imbecile old men of eighty or ninety were forced to go. The exiles were welcomed with every sign of sympathy in the countries where they took refuge; the people collected in crowds to salute them, wept as they beheld their pinched faces and tattered clothes. Many houses were opened to them, and there were warm hearts who offered them all they had.

A multitude of the Protestant laity tried to follow the pastors, but pitiless laws were soon made condemning all such voluntary exiles: the men, to the galleys for life; the women, to perpetual imprisonment, with confiscation of goods in each case. Those who aided them incurred the same penalties, and later on to help a Protestant to fly from France became a capital crime: for Louis XIV. considered his *glory* compromised by their flight; to evade his paternal cruelties was *criminal disobedience*, as it was *ingratitude* not to accept his royal permission to return to endure them. A network of guards was placed along the frontiers, but the fugitives found means to escape, these faithful watch-dogs being often inclined, both by humanity and interest, to shut their eyes for a consideration.

Itineraries of out-of-the-way roads were prepared, and guides made little fortunes out of the hazardous business of conducting the rich to some favourable exit. This 'underground railway' was naturally

fuller of strange and romantic incident than that with which our century has been familiar. The fugitives generally escaped by night in all sorts of disguises; some as shepherds or soldiers, others as sportsmen, pilgrims, valets, merchants or beggars; the women put on male attire, trundled a barrow, or carried a load on their heads. Some dyed their skins, or pretended that they were silly; some escaped by sea, hiding themselves among the bales of merchandise, or in casks, or under a heap of coals; and such was the power of endurance begotten of this anxiety to escape, that children were occasionally hidden for weeks in the holds of outward-bound vessels without uttering a single cry. Among the orders issued by this royal hunter after the souls of men, was one forbidding vessels to leave a French port until they had been fumigated with a deadly gas, which would suffocate any one hidden. The royal arms seemed almost as long and as deadly as those of the octopus, for a fugitive was not always safe in the open sea; as, for example, the Lord of Castelfranc, who, with his wife and family, were captured in a boat near Rochelle, three of his sons and three of his daughters being sent to the Caribbee Islands as slaves.

In these efforts thousands perished of fatigue, cold, and hunger, by shipwreck or the bullets of soldiers; hundreds, seized and condemned to the galleys, were compelled, in company with assassins, and laden with heavy chains, to traverse France until they reached the place of their lifelong slavery at Dunkirk or Marseilles; while their mothers, sisters, and daughters were incarcerated in dungeons like Aigues-Mortes, or shut up in convents for the rest of their days.

Among the visions which a more enlightened seer than Dante saw of other worlds was a vision of the

souls of those who were slain for the Word of God and the testimony that they held. 'And they cried with a loud voice, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not avenge our blood on them that dwell upon the earth?' Such was the cry that now arose from every part of France: from the depths of the forest, from the caverns in the craggy rocks and the caverns on the seashore, by the roadside, in the depths of prisons, from the seats of galleys, from the cells of convents, and from seemingly peaceful homesteads, and amidst the pomps of the Romanist ritual; such was the cry that rose into the ear of the All-Just, and it was assuredly answered, though the *dies iræ, dies illa* came not for a century.

The Government, as is usual with despots, aggravated the position by vacillation. For a short time imagining that their very severities gave zest to the emigration, they permitted free egress; but the flight only took greater proportion, and they returned at once to the *régime* of terror.

Though lofty souls like Massillon¹ scorned to consider the material ruin to France, when compared to the magnificent result accomplished in the extirpation of heresy from its soil, it must have given more mundane minds a certain anxiety to see whole populations deserting their homes and great industries apparently ruined for ever. The province of Saintonge lost 100,000 of its inhabitants, Languedoc 50,000, Guienne not less, and the Lyonnais and the Dauphiny each probably more. The clothworkers of Abbeville left in a body, and the manufacture was extinguished. In Tours, the number of weavers fell from 40,000 to 4,000; in Lyons, from 12,000 to 3,000.

¹ Massillon, 1663-1744; priest, 1692; Bishop of Clermont, 1717; considered the greatest pulpit orator the Gallican Church ever produced, especially distinguished for funeral orations.

Out of 400 tanneries in Lorraine, only fifty-four remained by 1698. The population of Nantes was reduced from 80,000 to about half that number. And this gives only an imperfect idea of the suffering inflicted. In the province of Languedoc alone, 100,000 persons were, in the course of a generation, the victims of a premature death; and of these, 10,000 suffered by the stake, the gallows, or the wheel.

How many souls were lost to France will never be exactly known. Voltaire calculated that in the space of three years nearly 50,000 families went out of the kingdom. Antoine Court gave the number of persons quitting France at this time as 800,000. Mr. Smiles states that it is believed 400,000 emigrants left France previous to the Revocation, and that 600,000 left after that event. This accords with the calculation of Charles Coquerel, who says that the number of Protestants at the time was about two millions.

Those who remained in France were mostly poor. The noble and wealthy had either abjured or emigrated, and of those who had neither yielded nor fled nearly all held aloof. If we look for the names of Coligny, Bruillon, Rohan, Tremouille, Sully, La Force, D'Aubigné, we shall see their descendants, as of most other famous Huguenot nobles, amongst the least worthy parasites of the Ludovican court; the few faithful among the Protestant nobility emigrated, to buy lands and take high positions in England and elsewhere. The true Huguenot stock remained in France.

Every time this martyr-people raised their heads they were subjected to the torture which had been found so effective—the dragonnades. No part of the country was spared but Alsace, where the Lutherans were numerous, and too near their German brethren.

The reign of terror going on before and after the Revocation had brought thousands of forced abjurations. And this prostration of souls had been followed by the demolition of temples. The destruction of the less important ones going on through September, 1685, was now crowned by the demolition of the three largest at Rouen, Nismes, and Paris. The destruction of the latter, the temple at Charenton, erected by Salomon de Brousse, architect of the Luxembourg, was ordered the very day after the Edict of Revocation was signed.

It commenced on October 22nd, and though it was difficult to find workmen, it was levelled by the end of the week, Saturday, the 27th. Sunday following was the feast of SS. Simon and Jude, and the lesson for the day was John xiv. 19 to the end of the chapter, with St. Augustine's homily on the words, 'Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more.' The outward signs of the Lord's presence might go, but the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, would be with those that loved Him and kept His words, giving them His peace. How truly this was fulfilled the martyrologies of the time testify.

Meanwhile the prince of this world was at hand; a period was coming which had nothing, not even the semblance, of Christ in it, a period plainly, openly, and unreservedly diabolic.

The sheep deprived of their shepherds were ordered to come at once into the fold of the king's Church, and as they did not obey, their chief elders were imprisoned by *lettres de cachet*. The Marquis de Seignelay, son of Colbert, had been the king's agent in ordering the destruction of the temple at Charenton; he now sent for a hundred of the principal Protestants in France. They came, and found themselves confronted by the king's attorney and

the heads of the police, and required there and then to sign a recantation. They hesitated, the doors were locked, and they were told with many threats that they should not leave until they obeyed.

The edict obliged all Protestants to send their children to Catholic schools to learn the catechism. For fear that they should refuse, a new ordinance took from Protestants all children between five and sixteen years of age, to be placed with Catholic relatives or elsewhere. This law could not be executed; France had not enough colleges, convents, and hospitals to receive the victims. It was accordingly confined to those who could afford to pay for the maintenance of their children, and from them they chiefly took their daughters. Louis XIV. and Madame de Maintenon displayed an especial interest in this method of completing the work of the dragonnades and the Revocation. They founded the great establishment of St. Cyr, and here the pick of the young Protestant girls, carefully selected with reference to birth and other qualities, arrived, to be brought up under the immediate care of the supposed wife of the king.

The brutal methods tried with the Protestants in Paris had their counterpart in the country. The 'reunited brethren,' as the new converts were sometimes called, were obliged to sit in church on forms apart, and their names were called over by the priest. Failure to be present at the service and take part in the communion exposed them to a severe chastisement. And the nature of these chastisements may be learnt from the fact that Protestant women acting as servants could be flogged and branded with a fleur-de-lis. Not sure of the sincerity of their thralls, even when they kissed the ground most humbly, the priests compelled them to

carry the lighted tapers, the incense, and the holy water, all abominations to the true Huguenot.

Even Louis saw that such exasperating tyranny was beyond human endurance, and secretly ordered the intendants not to go too far. But the limit had been passed, and the very children became inflexible in rebellion. Two little girls, under the very eyes of Bossuet, displayed such defiant and persistent courage against every form of persecution, that they have earned a place in the history of France, and have been entitled by Michelet 'the little lions of Meaux.' As to the people, without pastors or leaders, they determined to act for themselves. Notwithstanding the laws in force, they held assemblies in desert places, at the tops of mountains, and in the depths of the ravines, taking an oath from each other to live and die in the Reformed religion.

III.

'BECAUSE I LIVE, YE SHALL LIVE ALSO.'

IN its earlier stages the movement for reform in France was most vigorous in the provinces to the north-east; later on its forces concentrated themselves in the south-eastern provinces; after the Revocation, Languedoc became the citadel. During the former periods Paris and La Rochelle had been successively its centres, now their place was taken by Nîmes.

A month before the Revocation, Louvois had placed a man of his own order as ruler over Languedoc. Nicolas de Lamoignon de Bâville, Count of Launai-Coursen, Lord of Bois, Vaugrigneux, Chavagne, Lamothe-Chaudernier, Beuxe, and other places, now became intendant of that province. He was thirty-seven years of age when he came into

the province, and he ruled it for thirty-three years ; during which time, according to his own account, a hundred thousand persons suffered under the action of the law, a tenth part of them ending their days at the stake, on the gallows, or by the wheel. However, this terrible persecutor was no Torquemada. Descended from one of the lawyers of the thirteenth century, who had helped in founding the monarchical power, he was simply a 'Javert,'¹ who had no superior officers but Louvois and the king. Apart from his duty as chief representative of the law in Languedoc, Bâville did not agree with the policy of the Revocation ; but its provisions once embodied in the code, no one carried them out with more vigour. His authoritative temper could not endure any help except from submissive servants. Although he appeared to work so ardently for Catholicism, he was by no means friendly to the priests, stigmatising the new contingent sent to assist in the conversion of the Protestants as 'a bad lot,' an opinion which his military coadjutor, Noailles, was inclined to extend to the whole of the clergy of the province. Bâville soon sent the poor old Cardinal-bishop of Narbonne to his account by informing the king that he lived in adultery. A *lettre de cachet* shut up the lady, and the cardinal became melancholy, lost his reason, and died. A man more in accordance with Bâville's ideas came to take a leading clerical position in the south of France. The Abbé du Chayla, a missionary from Siam, a man combining the energy of the West with the merciless cruelty of the East, was made Arch-priest of the Cevennes.

When the dragonnades ceased, many of the new converts left off going to church, and lived apparently without any religion at all. However, they met

¹ The famous policeman in Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*.

for domestic worship, each hearth becoming an altar and every householder a priest.

The necessity of sharing each other's consolations soon united them into larger assemblies, which, in order to hold unobserved, they withdrew to the woods and on the mountains. In the biblical language they so much loved, they called this 'going into the desert.'

In parting from their flocks the pastors had said: 'In our absence the Spirit of the Lord will be with you; Jesus will be your Pastor, O scattered sheep of Israel; rather than leave you without consolation, He will speak to you by the mouth of simple women and children.' And so it proved. These poor people had lost their ordinary means of spiritual nutrition, but they did not therefore lack their daily bread. The word was not wanting, and multitudes followed the new preachers, who were, with rare exceptions, working men. Vivens, the most famous among them, was a weaver and a schoolmaster. Meyrueis was also a weaver; Roussel, a labourer; Vidal, a schoolmaster; Berthezène, Bernard, Dalgues, Dhombres, Quet, Papus, Soubeyrun, Cognac, Bruguier, all came from the labouring class. With them were three theological students—Poisson, Rey, and Bonnèmere. In all there were forty preachers, followed by congregations numbering at least hundreds, sometimes thousands. This movement commenced in all parts, as if by some common inspiration, in January, 1688.

The military commandant in the district, the Duke of Noailles, counselled Louvois to remove the whole population to some other part of France; but the remorseless minister did not see his way to so heroic a remedy. He believed that this new movement must be due to the return of some of the

exiled pastors, and accordingly a decree was issued condemning all ministers re-entering France to death, and those who concealed them, the men to the galleys, the women to perpetual imprisonment, the informer to receive a reward of 5,500 livres, besides protection and complete secrecy. However, the nephew of the radiant Madame de Sévigné, Monsieur le Marquis de la Trousse, who was on active service in the Cevennes, and found the work of hunting these 'miserable Huguenots dreadfully fatiguing,' considered fifty louis d'ors quite sufficient reward for the capture of preachers who were only labouring men. He beat the country with his dragoons, surprised several meetings, cut down a portion of the worshippers on the spot, hung another portion on the trees, and led off the leaders, to be public examples on the scaffold.

The usual punishment for attending an assembly in the desert was the galleys for life. What that meant we know from the inconceivably touching account of the long martyrdom of Louis de Marolles and the entrancing history of Jean Marteithe. And to these we may add another affecting narrative by Jean Bion, a Catholic priest, who, a chaplain on the galleys, was converted to Protestantism by Catholic cruelty and Huguenot endurance. In these works we have full details of the long and cruel martyrdom suffered by these 'forçats pour la foi,' these noble convicts for the faith. They were dragged from prison to prison, suffering every indignity and the most incredible hardship. Starved, beaten, loaded with chains, shut up in dank, pestiferous holes, where they lay with the vermin and the rats—even these horrors, to be met with all over France, were outdone in Paris, where the treatment was directly under the eyes of the chief authorities in the State.

The prison of La Tournelle, in which those condemned to the galleys were lodged, was an enormous vault, along the floor and round the walls of which were great beams of wood, to which the unhappy galley-slaves were attached by iron collars, so arranged that they could neither stand, nor lie, nor sit. Five hundred persons could be thus fastened down in this torture-house, and imagination dares not conceive the chorus of blasphemies, imprecations, and groans which must have arisen from this crowd of miserable wretches, many of whom were assassins and cut-throats by profession. But this was only the first stage in the dolorous journey the Huguenot confessors had to make before they reached their final destination at Marseilles. Loaded with chains, weighing for each person 150 lbs., and forming part in a long yoke of slaves, they arrived at Charenton, where they were stripped naked in the open air, and kept in that condition while their clothes were examined and rifled.

After shivering for perhaps a couple of hours, they were reclad and driven into stables to sleep. Happy the man whose bed was a heap of dung, for in it he found a little warmth, the first necessity of human nature!

These mean cruelties were but the beginning of innumerable others. If the galley-slave survived this terrible march to Marseilles, he had to inure himself to a life in which he was exposed to the scorching heat of the sun by day and the deadly damps and many inclemencies of the night. In the midst of tugging crowds, constantly streaming with perspiration, his clothes soon swarmed with lice, which at nights took the place of the executioners who beat and tormented him during the day. But even then the terror of the lash was upon him, so

that, however his poor flesh was irritated by the vermin, he dared not move, lest the rattle of his chain should awaken the officer. It was bad enough to work at the oar, liable at every moment to a terrible blow; but when the galleys arrived at a fort, the thrashing became perpetual, and the poor slave worked in the midst of a chorus of groans and lamentations. When ill, he was sent to a close, dark chamber in the hold, where there was no air beyond that admitted by a small hatchway two feet wide; and here, on a sort of scaffold not more than three feet from the ceiling, without any bed, he was laid among the sick and dying, and there left to be gnawed by vermin.

Lifting the bonnet at the elevation of the host, or kneeling at mass, had come to mean for the Huguenot what throwing a handful of incense on the altar of Cæsar meant for the primitive Christian; it was the recognised sign of submission. Chained to the oar for refusing it, what more abominable tyranny than to allow his gaolers to force him to do it by barbarities which only stopped short by a few inches of actual murder! Yet at one period not bowing at mass was punished on the galleys by the bastinado.

This terrible punishment is described by Bion. The victim, divested of his chains and naked, was tightly held across a great gun by four Turks, and flogged with a knotted rope or a stout cudgel until the flesh was flayed off the bones. Vinegar and salt were then rubbed into the wounds, and the sufferer thrown into the deadly hold before described. Here, on the occasion referred to in Bion's narrative, the kind-hearted priest followed the victims, wishing to do what he could to console them. 'But,' says he, 'I had more need of consolation than they had. God, who was their support, armed them with a

constancy and a patience truly Christian.' 'The world seeth Me no more ; but ye see Me : because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you.'

Louis de Marolles was of noble family, distinguished both in philosophy and science. Seeking a refuge for conscience in a foreign clime, he was stopped at Strasburg, December 2nd, 1685, conveyed in a wagon to Chalons, where he was sentenced to the galleys for life. He was sent to Paris, and arrived at the Conciergerie, March 4th, 1686. After lying for two months in a dark dungeon, with seven miserable beings who were awaiting their fate on the galleys, the gibbet, or the wheel, his sentence was confirmed, and he was taken to La Tournelle, the torture-house already described, where he was, by express order of the king, loaded with a chain about his neck weighing thirty pounds. His wife was allowed to put her hands through a grating to wash the wounds the chains had made. The 20th of July, suffering from fever, he had to commence his dolorous journey to Marseilles. He lay at the point of death on some planks without any straw, and nothing for a pillow but his hat, being jumbled for fourteen hours a day over stony roads, and thrust at night into local dungeons. On his arrival at Marseilles he was too ill to go on to the galleys. Sufficiently recovered, he worked on them for a year, and then was removed to solitary confinement in the citadel of Marseilles, where for five years longer he maintained the conflict against hunger and nakedness, darkness and cold. Defrauded by his gaolers, he sat in semi-darkness, clad in rags, almost barefooted, nearly starved, and with no fire during the winter. After months of prayer, during which his mind well-nigh gave way, peace and serenity returned, and his spiritual joys

were great. June 17th, 1692, his worn-out body succumbed, and he passed away. His corpse was handed over to the Turks, to be buried in the Mohammedan cemetery. Nevertheless the Roman Catholic Church had to read over this holy martyr a noble burial service, exactly describing the nature of his confession, and the glorious reward promised to such as are faithful unto death.

It was evening when the swarthy Moors laid in its silent resting-place the remains of their companion in tribulation, and at vespers the priests read in their breviaries an answer to the cry that had gone up from the martyr's soul in the solitude of the dungeon 'O Lord, how long? how long, O Lord of hosts?'

'I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: they stood before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; which came up out of great tribulation. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.'

Terrorised by fear of such sufferings into abjuration, tender consciences groaned in bitterness, and reproached themselves daily, fearing eternal perdition.

On the bed of death they would often speak out boldly, and utterly refuse the sacraments. To prevent this scandal, a new law was enacted, by which every sick person thus acting was, if he recovered, to be sent to the galleys, while, if he died, his corpse was to be dragged through the streets on a hurdle and thrown to the dogs. This outrage on humanity was really committed on the body of M. Chevenix, the great-grandfather of the late Archbishop of Dublin. In Calais the executioner took flight rather than take part in a scene which turned the populace into a horde of wolves. The scandal was too great, and an ordinance was issued, February 5th, 1687, by which his Majesty relaxed the severity of the law, so that it could only be executed if the relatives made themselves parties to the obstinate heresy of the defunct.

Louis had made it death to re-enter France and exercise the calling of a Protestant pastor. He now had to carry out his law, and to embroe his hands in the blood of the saints. One of his first victims was the theological student, Fulcran Rey. Betrayed by one of the tribe of Judas, he was offered pardon if he would abjure. But nothing would move him, he only begged that he might not be tried by the sight of his father and mother. When told that he was to be hanged, he said: 'They treat me more gently than they treated my Saviour, condemning me to so easy a death. I quite expected to be broken alive or burnt.' And lifting his eyes he returned thanks to God. Put to the torture and his limbs dislocated, he said, 'I believe you have suffered more than I.' On the scaffold he intended to confess his faith; but around the gallows were a number of drums, which were beaten the moment he began to speak. He was put to death at Beaucaire,

in the diocese of Nismes, July 7th, 1686, having only lived in this sorrowful world twenty-four years.

But although they stopped the martyr's voice, there was another Speaker who knew how to make Himself heard. Throughout the diocese of Nismes the priests who read their breviary might have known, had their eyes been opened, that the true Church was called upon that day to take part in a sacrifice acceptable to God, the giving up of life itself for His sake, the whole of the offices for July 7th being framed as if they had been written for the martyrdom of Fulcran Rey. They commence with the sad complaint, 'My enemies have wrongfully persecuted me; I am become a stranger to my brethren: for the zeal of Thy house hath eaten me up. Save me, O God, for the waters have come in, even unto my soul.' To which complaint the Church utters many consoling words, taken from all parts of Scripture and from the Apocrypha. A lesson from the Book of Wisdom sets forth the agony and triumph of the man of strong faith; another is the well-known passage in which Paul gives the proofs of his apostleship in the sufferings that he had endured; while the second lesson is taken from our Lord's words, 'If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me.' As the moment of the final agony approaches, the martyr's faith increases, and the promises and the consolations of the Holy Spirit grow stronger. 'For I am the Lord thy God, that taketh thee by the hand, and say unto thee, Fear not, I have helped thee.' And finally the martyr falls, saying, 'The Lord is on my side, I will not fear what man can do unto me.' Whereupon as it were a heavenly chorus breaks in, softly chanting the words: 'After a storm Thou makest a calm, and after tears and weeping Thou pourest out joyful-

ness. Be Thy name, O Lord God of Israel, blessed for ever.' At vespers the Church again, gathered together in spirit, utters the eulogy over the dead body of the martyr. 'Thus did this man die, leaving not only unto young men, but also unto the whole nation, the memory of his death for an example of virtue and fortitude. Thou hast set on his head a crown of precious stones, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give him.'

IV.

RACINE'S 'ESTHER.'

THE same voice that strove to make itself heard in the breviary did not leave the court without an appeal. Many little facts show that conscience was working at Versailles. Perhaps its awakening was assisted by the ill-feeling with which Madame de Maintenon and a large party at court regarded Louvois. The cruelties committed on the Huguenots were laid at his door, and Madame de Maintenon became the advocate of gentler measures. She told the king that such violent methods would inspire the Protestants with an eternal antipathy to the true religion. Louis confessed that what she said made him uneasy, but thought it looked as if she might still be tinctured with some remains of attachment to her old religion.

After this rebuke, she seems to have proceeded, like the wise woman of Tekoah, by way of parable. She asked Racine to write a sacred drama, that her young ladies of St. Cyr could play before the king and the court. *Esther* was accordingly written, and played six times in January and February, 1689, before Louis XIV. and his court, the audiences comprising every one in France who had any pre-

tension to be considered illustrious, or who had a special reputation for wisdom and piety. On one occasion the king brought eight Jesuits, several of the clergy, and a certain Madame de Miramion, celebrated at the time for her piety, almsgiving, and the number of institutions she had founded. 'To-day,' said Madame de Maintenon, 'we play for the saints.' Bossuet was present on the 19th; but the most brilliant fête was on the 5th, when James II. and his queen were present.

Whatever was the extent of Madame de Maintenon's complicity, it is almost impossible to doubt that Racine knew what he meant. He was a Jansenist; he had given up dramatic writing, and his thoughts were turned to the eternity to which he was hastening. He was very adverse at first to complying with Madame de Maintenon's request; but he suddenly yielded, and threw himself with enthusiasm into the work. The tenour of the poem, the character of the man, the circumstances, all conspire to make it probable that Racine saw a great opportunity of instilling into the minds of these future mothers of the French nobility a horror of cruelty and injustice, and especially of that exterminating policy which had led to the destruction of a whole body of the people, and that the most worthy and religious in the land.

As for the rest of the world, we know for certain Madame de Maintenon was recognised in Esther, and that it was generally understood that Ahasuerus represented the king, and Haman, Louvois. Is it to be credited that the rest of the parable remained an enigma?

Even if the marquises and marchionesses were too much occupied with their own individual splendour to trouble about hidden meanings, how was

it that Bourdaloue and the Jesuits, Bossuet and the bishops, did not see in Racine's Mordecai the obstinate religionist, who not only had the insolence to refuse to be of the king's religion, but to brave fine, imprisonment, and public degradation rather than take off his hat as the host passed through the streets, and, though a galley-slave, suffered the flesh to be ploughed off his bones rather than bow at the elevation of what he regarded as an idol? Says Haman, Act ii., Scene 1 :

'The wretch disdains to bow when I appear.

* . * * * *

While every Persian, moved with holy awe,
 With downcast eyes falls prostrate on the ground,
 He boldly sits, unmoved his hateful head,
 These honours as impiety he scorns,
 Lifts his seditious forehead to my view,
 And e'en refuses to cast down his eyes!
 At whatsoever hour I come or go,
 I find him seated at the palace gate:
 His hateful visage persecutes my soul,
 My troubled mind e'en sees him in my sleep.
 This morn I strove to anticipate the dawn:
 I found him covered o'er with filthy dust,
 In rags, and pale his face, but still his eyes,
 E'en under ashes, no less pride displays.
 Whence can this insolent assurance come?'

Certes, the poet here touched the secret of the persecution, and the reason why no one would see to whom this passage referred. The Huguenot was the conscience of France; the only way to escape from that avenging eye was to forget it, to live as if it had no existence.

But every one recognised in Haman the minister then tottering to his fall. Could Louis, knowing what he did of Louvois' character and career, having in mind his treatment of the Palatinate, his order to burn Trèves, above all, his 'boasted mission,' have

failed to recognise his unscrupulous minister in words which people said Louvois had actually used?—

‘He knows his debt to me ; to make him great
I’ve trodden under foot remorse, fear, shame,
And with an iron heart, to show his power,
Have silenced law, made innocence to groan.’

Madame de Maintenon and Louvois so clearly and circumstantially indicated, how was it possible to escape the rest of the analogy, and not to see that the objects of Louvois’ cruelties and the people from whence Madame de Maintenon sprung were still more evidently represented by the Jews? The noble, wise, and reverend seigneurs who witnessed the play must have been extraordinarily ignorant of the history of their country if they failed to distinguish the people in Louvois’ day to whom the passage applied in which Haman relates how he obtained the edict against the Jews; for these words do not simply depict the policy of one violent and headstrong oppressor, but the policy of the French State from Richelieu to Louis XIV. :

‘I’ve prejudiced the king against them all :
Dark hints I dropt, so specious and yet false,
He trembled for his glory and his life.
I painted them seditious, powerful, rich ;
Their God an enemy to all our gods ;
Too long, said I, are they allowed to breathe,
Infecting all your states with impious rites.
Strangers in Persia, to our laws adverse,
They live divided from the rest of men ;
’Tis their sole aim to trouble our repose,
And hating all, are hated in their turn :
Prevent them, punish quickly their attempts,
Lastly, increase your treasures with their spoils.
I spoke, the king believed ; without delay
He put his powerful seal into my hand.
Take this, said he, secure thy king’s repose ;
Destroy these wretches, go, their spoils are thine.
Thus all the Jewish nation was condemned,
The day of slaughter we together fixed.’

The people of the Church, as well as the State officials, intendants of provinces, magistrates, military commanders, might be excused if they did not see in the lines, beginning,—

‘While grass o’ertops sad Salem’s mouldering wall,’

an allusion to the 850 Protestant temples whose ruins lay scattered over the land, and the Protestant worship completely silenced; but how was it possible that the king and courtiers, together with the bishops and the clergy, could hear the adjectives, *puissans, riches, seditieux*, and not recognise the people of whom for two centuries they had been the description? and how, when they heard the line,—

De leur dépouille enfin grossissez vos trésors,’

were they able to avoid feeling like Ahab when Elijah caught him in the plot of Naboth? For who that has read the story of Huguetan, the Protestant banker, does not know that in getting possession of the spoils of the Huguenots, the king and his ministers behaved like a gang of swindlers and brigands? As to the clergy, they acted everywhere in defiance of the commandment, ‘Thou shalt not steal.’ A royal edict entirely confused their ideas of mine and thine, and they increased the property of many of their institutions by the plunder of those of the Huguenots.

Had the passages quoted been the sole allusions, the general inability to see their application would have been surprising enough; but when the whole drama presents, in all its parts, and by every means, the striking analogy between the Jews in the days of Haman and the Huguenots in those of Louvois, and when, above all, the whole plot turns on the enemies of God’s people obtaining an exterminatory

edict against them, how could such words as these fail to make clear the intention of the poet?—

‘Read, read this order cruel, horrible.
We’re all proscribed; God’s Israel is no more.’

And when a few lines farther on the same speaker says,—

‘Et le roi trop crédule a signé cet édit,’

how was it possible the audiences at St. Cyr could avoid thinking of that fatal edict which had finally destroyed all the Protestant rights and liberties?

If they did, they were brought again to the subject by a delineation of its results. The horrors enacted in the Vivarais during the early part of this very year, where the soldiers tossed the children of the revolted Huguenots on the points of their bayonets, and the Marquis de Folleville crowned the mountains with a line of gibbets; the even worse atrocities committed in Savoy on the Vaudois by a French army, sent by Louvois, where they pitched the people, old and young, over the rocky precipices, where they burnt the sufferers piecemeal, flaying one alive, and other horrors beyond description—were not inadequately denounced in the presence of the very court from whence they had been inspired. In the midst of the choir a single voice is heard, the penetrating voice of a child—

‘What horrid carnage stains the soil!
How reeks the steel with murderous toil!
Its brightness with the blood defiled
Of sister, brother, parent, child;
Nor infancy nor hoary age
Escape the murderers’ impious rage.
What heaps of corpses press the ground
What mangled limbs are strewn around
Just God! Thy saints become the food
Of tigers fell, athirst for blood.’

This same chorus, Act i., Scene 5, seems an attempt to make the audience feel the anguish of the Huguenot families: the perpetual alarm, the sighs and groans and tears which were their daily lot, as they saw the holy cause, the one thing that gave charm and meaning to life, perish, and the God in whom they trusted apparently departing; to recall, if it were possible, in hearts hardened by respectability and an assured position, the suffering of the good fathers, or the brave brothers, bound in heavy chains, and forced to march from one end of France to the other,¹ until they reached the lot of their lives, the accursed galleys, while the mother and children were separated in prisons or nunneries.

One of the very youngest of the chorus utters the touching complaint—

‘What crime can on my infant head
Draw such a weight of woe?’

It is difficult to comprehend how Louis could fail to see himself in Ahasuerus, and if he did, he possessed a clue to the meaning of the whole piece. There was nothing in the character, as drawn by Racine, to offend him. On the contrary, the most skilful flattery is used to separate him from his minister, and to represent him as a terrible but gracious ruler, who had been misled by stratagem and calumny. The whole object of the play is to throw the blame of all the evil that had been done on to Louvois, completely to exonerate the king, and by every winsome artifice to draw him to the side of justice and pity. The biblical narrative lent itself admirably to this effort, for there such a monarch was represented, and the triumph of justice rendered complete. So in the concluding scenes,

‘Et traîne ses enfans captifs en mille lieux?’—Act i., Sc. 5.

the desired policy, the right words, are put into the mouth of the king :—

‘ I break the yoke imposed upon the Jews,
 And to their vengeance yield their enemies.
 Henceforth as Persians they shall be esteemed,
 And all that fear the name of Israel’s God
 Rebuild His temple ; in your cities dwell.
 Your happy children ’mong their solemn feasts
 Shall consecrate the triumph of this day ;
 And in their memory ever live my name.’

This happy revocation of the ‘ fatal edict ’ accomplished, the poet gives over the arch-enemy of the Hebrew people to a nemesis of which none ought to have missed the allusion ; for Haman is not only hanged on the gibbet he had prepared for Mordecai, but his bleeding corpse is dragged by a furious mob through the streets.

Then justice is appeased, and a burst of triumph springs forth, conceived in the spirit of the Hebrew prophets and psalmists, Racine using their very words :

‘ Rejoice, O Sion ! from the dust arise,
 And fling aside thy captive weeds,
 Thy pristine glory wear.
 All Zion’s lands are open now,
 Break all your chains,
 O captive tribes ;
 Ye exiled hosts, return.
 Over Alps and over seas,
 Gather from remotest lands,
 Gather, and come home.’

Such were the words uttered in the august presence of the man who had signed the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and who in so doing had fulfilled his destiny as head of a State of whose policy his was simply the final, the complete expression ; such were the words uttered by innocent children,

who knew nothing of their import, but who to some extent truly represented the sufferers, and who, disguise it as she might, were inspired by one whose whole nature was Huguenot; such were the words, offered with all the art and with the most refined and delicate flattery by the greatest poet of the time, and perhaps the most perfect that France has ever produced. Was Louis XIV. touched? Not one whit! Monsieur le Prince shed tears; what did the very Christian king do? Amused himself with the faces of the little actresses, so that he detected in a moment when one of them had been crying. He went back to Versailles delighted, little dreaming of the reproof that he had received, and totally unaffected by the piteous appeals that had been made to his justice and humanity.

Nevertheless the party of moderation continued their efforts, and succeeded in softening the extreme rigour of the persecution. A recommendation comes from Versailles to treat gently a girl at Metz who had refused to kneel before the holy sacrament.

Just nemesis of tyranny! the moment it begins to relax, its punishment commences. At the very time the young actresses at St. Cyr were seeking to touch the hard heart of their own Ahasuerus, and in the final chorus were celebrating in advance the success of their appeal, the sufferers themselves were actually expecting to realize as a fact the reign of justice and of peace that the imagination of the poet had so finely depicted.

In 1686 Jurieu published his book, *Accomplissement des Prophéties ou de la Deliverance Prochaine de l'Eglise*, in which he calculated that the resurrection of French Protestantism would take place in April, 1689. This book penetrated into France among the oppressed, and notably in the Dauphiny,

where it proved the spark that lit the tinder, which soon burst into a conflagration, and covered the Dauphiny, the Vivarais, and the Cevennes with innumerable child-prophets.

Touching thought! if these children had not spoken, the very stones would have cried out. A dark or cruel era was passing away, a bright and new world was about to appear. Who better at this time could announce the new evangel than the innocent, the childlike? When the shepherds lay with their flocks on that wondrous night in which men looked for the first time on their Saviour, suddenly was heard on high the sound of a heavenly host singing, Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will to men; so now a chorus of earth's angels, her little ones, greet the great Revolution with which the coming century was to close, and in the midst of which we now live and work, with a message answering to that of their young sisters at St. Cyr.

But for those who heard these solemn warnings and took no heed, the day of mercy was passed; Louis got harder and harder. And he seemed especially angry with those who had thought to turn his heart to pity and justice. Fénelon was practically exiled from the court; the Archbishop of Paris, Noailles, who had exhorted the king to take measures more conformed to the spirit of Christianity, was so completely the object of royal disgust, that Louis rudely told one of the archbishop's relatives that he could not bear to hear the name of Noailles, whereupon the duke meekly replied, 'Sire, I will change my name if it displeases you.' Racine was equally humiliated and brokenhearted at the disgrace into which he fell with the monarch at whose shrine he offered so many flowers.

Talking one day with Mme. de Maintenon on the misery of the people, and the necessity of doing something to remove it, what he said appeared to her so wise and reasonable, that she asked him to work it out for her, promising the memoir should never go out of her hands. Racine did what she asked; but one day the king, entering her apartment, observed the manuscript, and taking it up began to read. After perusing three or four pages he inquired who was the author. Mme. de Maintenon replied that she had promised to keep that secret. But he urged her in such a manner that she was obliged to tell him. 'Because,' said he, 'Racine can make fine verses, does he imagine he knows how to govern? because he is a great poet, does he pretend to be a minister?' Racine was overwhelmed when he heard of it, and fell ill of a fever. Mme. de Maintenon did all she could to encourage him, promising that she would restore his credit. But he was quite certain she could not; and the reason he gave was that his aunt, a nun of Port Royal, convinced that he would never be saved if he continued to be a courtier, prayed that he might have nothing but chagrins and vexations. He never recovered his position, but completely gave way and died.

Mme. de Maintenon had more fortitude. Seeing how utterly impossible it was to touch the king, she appeared his docile instrument, and in 1697 drew up a memoir in which she agreed that any relaxation of the laws against the Protestants would be regarded as a sign of fear, rendering them more insolent than ever, and ready to take advantage of any misfortune that might happen to the king; that the most obstinate would return and make the new converts discontented; that tacit liberty of conscience would become a platform to agitate for liberty of

worship and the right of parents to educate their children in their own faith, thus perpetuating a body in the kingdom opposed to the good of the State. Such relaxation moreover would not lessen the distrust the Protestants felt of the king's designs, and would by its apparent vacillation injure the king's reputation. She would not force communions, nor drag dead bodies through the mud, nor do anything that gave the Huguenots the benefit of posing as martyrs; the great point, she urged, was to take away the children from the influence of their parents. She proposed that the education of the children of the poor should be made a great State affair, and that in order to do it thoroughly neither pains nor money should be spared to support the Protestant children independently of their parents.

Thus the fall of Mme. de Maintenon was completed. The death of Louvois, so much desired, had only brought upon her all the heavy secrets of the State, and she was compelled to share in the crimes it had long got into the habit of committing. Her chamber became the centre of the spider's web which spread all over France, sucking up the resources of the country by every possible means; the headquarters of the cruel military police, the cabinet where private letters were opened, and from whence were issued *lettres de cachet*, consigning men, without trial or any reason given, to the Bastille and other prisons during the king's pleasure. What a fate for the grand-daughter of the honest, outspoken Huguenot, Agrippa d'Aubigné! But the hour of visitation did not pass away at once. Many warnings came before this seventeenth-century Pharaoh was given up entirely to his hardness. These we shall now relate; but it will not lessen the interest of our story if we state beforehand that they

had not the slightest influence, but that on April 13th, 1698, Louis XIV. put an end to all attempts to convert him to humanity by solemnly confirming the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

V.

A HUGUENOT SEER.

To Bossuet, the champion of autocracy, the Protestant Church of France gave a foeman worthy of his steel. Pierre Jurieu, to use the words of Bayle,¹ was one of the first men of the age, and the very first of the Reformed communion. Michelet calls him '*le grand Jurieu.*' He fought alone and in single combat one after the other, Arnauld,² Bossuet, Nicole,³ and Maimbourg;⁴ and afterwards he had Bayle himself and other Protestants for opponents.

His *Sighs of Enslaved France*⁵ show, by the mass of detail crowded into a few pages, how complete and even minute was his knowledge; yet it is not this, but the great and noble love of justice and liberty which burns in every line, that entitles him to the appellation *le grand Jurieu*. It is plain from this work where his real contention with Bossuet lay.

His one object throughout was to make manifest that the cause of all the misery of France was the idolatrous homage paid to the man who believed himself a god upon earth, Louis, *le grand monarque*.

¹ Pierre Bayle (1647-1706), the philosopher. He and Jurieu represent opposing tendencies of Protestant thought: Jurieu leaning towards orthodoxy and mysticism, Bayle towards free thought and natural science.

² Antoine Arnauld (1612-1697), eminent defender of Jansenist doctrine.

³ Pierre Nicole (1625-1695), Port Royalist, distinguished as a controversialist.

⁴ Louis Maimbourg (1610-1686), historian, ardent Gallican.

⁵ *Les Soupirs de la France esclave*. Amsterdam, 1694.

With great art Jurieu enlisted every interest in the kingdom against this ever-increasing oppression, showing that it alone was growing, while all else was perishing. After enumerating between thirty and forty different taxes, he declared that the government of France drew more money from its miserable subjects than was extracted by their various rulers from all the rest of the nations in Europe put together. 'A thousand channels are open to-day by which they draw the blood of the people, to make it run into the abyss of the insatiable cupidity and unmeasured ambition of the prince.' And this outspoken language is sustained throughout.

It would be difficult to find anywhere a nobler vindication of the honour of God and the rights of man against the usurpation of monarchical pride and presumption, together with the servility on which it feeds, than in Jurieu's *Reflections on the Cruel Persecution suffered by the Reformed Church of France*. Jurieu had all his life lived in the society of the Hebrew prophets; he had caught their tone and drunk deeply of their spirit; and like them the one interest that in him absorbed all others was the cause of the kingdom of heaven. He loved and pitied his country with something of the love and pity Jeremiah had for Jerusalem; but as that prophet was certain that it was the will of the Lord that Judæa should be conquered by Assyria, so Jurieu and the more ardent French Protestants believed William of Orange the divinely appointed instrument for the restoration of the reign of justice in France. And as in so many other crises in Christian history, they found strength and consolation in applying to their own times the universal truths underlying the mystical figures of the Apocalypse. Jurieu undertook their interpretation; and



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though he proved, as many others have done, in error when he attempted to give details of time and place, he was, in the spirit of his interpretations, and even in their general scope, most true.

When Jurieu saw in the silencing of the Protestant ministry at the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes a fulfilment of the eleventh chapter of the Apocalypse, he was completely justified; but the same cannot be said when, literalising the mystical figures, he asserted that the witnesses for Reform would rise again in three years and a half, that is to say, in the summer of 1689, and that in the revolution that would follow a prince of the true religion would appear on the throne of France, leading the way to the triumph of the great cause of the Reformation. That the witnesses for Reform rose up again and stood on their feet is certain, and that the great earthquake came is also equally certain; but it did not follow with the rapidity Jurieu expected, nor did it come in the form or by the instruments he supposed. Thus, notwithstanding the derision of many of his fellow Protestants, he has been more than justified, and he is now recognised as the chief among them all, and the real leader of their cause.

Jurieu piously gathered every sign that appeared to indicate the drawing nigh of the great day for which he was looking. In his *Pastoral Letters*, which, with indefatigable industry, he published fortnightly, he stated, on the authority of various persons whose names and actual testimony he gave, that in many parts of the south of France sounds and voices had been heard in the air. These sounds seem to have been heard chiefly in the neighbourhood of Orthez, a town on a spur of the Pyrenees, Catholic magistrates admitting that they had heard lovely singing. In fact, the accounts affirm that

there was not a house in Orthez in which some one had not heard this singing in the air. The popular belief alarmed the authorities, for the parliament of Pau and the intendant of Béarn published a decree which forbade men to go to hear these aërial psalms, or to say that they had heard them, under a penalty of 500 crowns, and a later ordinance increased the penalty to 2,000 crowns.

But we should have a most inadequate idea of Jurieu's *Pastoral Letters* if we suppose them confined to or chiefly taken up with such matters. What really forms the staple are authentic records from time to time of the sufferings, physical and mental, of the martyrs for the rights of conscience, as well as for those of the individual and of the family, in this unhappy land of France. They powerfully sustained the cause of justice and liberty throughout Europe by keeping alive hope in the hearts of the sufferers. Prayer arose daily from hundreds of domestic altars, active sympathy was aroused, and mutual action carried out.

The career of a young man named Pierre Papus, called La Rouvière, gives some idea of the spirit which pervaded the Protestants of Languedoc at this time. Moved by an intense desire to arouse to repentance those who from terror had fallen from their faith, he thus consoled his father, who knew what such a determination must mean: 'Do not weep, but show a Christian generosity in making a sacrifice of your son to God, as Abraham sacrificed Isaac; nothing will so please Him as this voluntary offering.' 'The will of the Lord be done,' said the father, embracing him; 'may He accompany you everywhere with the virtue of His grace and the force of His arm, so that you may happily and successfully make use of the glorious talent He has given you!'

What was that talent? Prayer. He would not preach, though begged to do so. 'Each,' he said, 'according to St. Paul, has his gift, one in one way and another in another; happy is he who uses such as he has received.' His prayers astonished, awoke, and filled with new energy all who heard them. Arrested in 1695, he was accused of murder, and condemned to be broken alive on the wheel. On the scaffold he said, 'I can say boldly before the throne of grace that I am innocent of the murder of which I am accused.' He was strangled, and then broken.

VI.

THE LITTLE PROPHETS OF THE CEVENNES.

A PRAIRIE on fire, what is that to the soul of a people ablaze with Divine indignation? This dumb, dark mass of labouring men and women—dumb as to their endless wrongs, dark as to the reason or remedy—in the fires of a cruel persecution, feel their common life, and arise in vengeance. Driven like cattle to the worship they believed idolatrous, compelled to render themselves apostates, they groan and writhe, but comprehend not the meaning of their misery. But as the suffering goes on and increases, an extraordinary result ensues. Instead of enduring like dumb, isolated troops of cattle, suddenly the people feel absolutely one: their minds move, and move in unison; their mouths are unlocked, the treasure of ages comes forth, and that through the mouths of the youngest among them. What a scene was the Cevennes, the Dauphiny, and the Vivarais in the autumn and spring of 1688-89. Little children—young girls and small boys—were seized with an uncontrollable desire to pray and

preach. They rose up in the houses of their parents and of their masters, and exhorted all present to repent, above all of the sin of going to mass. They prayed in the most admirable manner, touching every heart. Sometimes they were torn with convulsions, and forthwith came a prophecy: great judgments were at hand; the Church was to be re-established, and her enemies overthrown.

Catholic writers of the time attributed the explosion to Jurieu's prophecies. An old Huguenot named De Serre, one of the singular class known as *gentilhommes verriers*, brought, it is said, into France a copy of the book; and he and his wife formed a school of young prophets and prophetesses in the Dauphiny. At the utmost, however, Jurieu's book and the school established by De Serre were but the spark that set light to the tinder; for the spirit of prophecy manifested itself many miles away from the Dauphiny. It was no mere vague declamation, nor was it to any great extent prophecy in the sense of foretelling; it was as preachers of righteousness that these youthful prophets appeared.

Isabeau Vincent was specially famous. An ignorant shepherd-girl, she uttered in good French sermons which deeply impressed those who listened. These sermons followed closely the order of the Protestant service; and though she had never learnt a psalm in her life, nor understood a single line, she sang them very sweetly and without missing a single syllable. In the night, or very late in the evening, after the moon was up, in out-of-the-way places, in deep gorges of the rocks, or high up in some mountain fastness, or, if a village was wholly Protestant, then within the walls of some sheep farm, these rough, bronzed peasants met to hear one or more of their own children—little girls of eleven, boys of

twelve or thirteen—step out one after the other, and in language solemn as the most aged pastor, beseech their audience to repent and make their peace with God. And many were touched with the same heavenly fervour; even strong young men, who went perhaps half mocking, were arrested by a boy's piping voice, a boy half their age, who revealed to them the exact state of their minds.

How affecting a history! These poor people believed as unhesitatingly as the heroes of the Old Testament that their Father in heaven, seeing how cruelly they were treated, had actually come among them to save and deliver them, to be Himself their Shepherd. 'In all their afflictions He was afflicted.' And this dear Father always commenced His revelations by the words, 'I say to thee, My son,' or 'My daughter,' or 'My child.' And under such guidance nothing daunted the courage of these children. Isabeau, taken before the terrible Bâville, replied to his interrogation, 'You can put me to death; hundreds of better preachers than I am will rise up in my place.'

Some were older. Gabriel Astier, whose name is distinguished among the young men, was twenty-two years of age. He had come direct from the school of De Serre. He preached to and imparted his gift to all his family. His flock increased, his fame spread, the police were sent after him. He withdrew with his congregation to the opposite side of the Rhone, under the protection of a lady of position; but she was herself pursued, so that Gabriel had to seek refuge in an inaccessible natural fortress high up in the mountains. Here, like birds flying from all directions, great crowds came, camping out and living on apples and nuts. They hear impassioned discourses, intermingled with ejacula-

tory prayer. 'Lord, forgive these poor sinners! It is the great, the damning sin to worship in the idol-temple. Obey God. Win back your religious liberty by force of arms. God is on your side. At this moment His word is beginning to be fulfilled. The King of England is coming with a great army; the Church will be re-established, the temples rebuilt, the true religion prevail.' At times the preacher seemed agonised; then he called a child, and told him to sing a psalm, and peace and calm returned. It was indeed a terrible thing for these poor, ignorant men to undertake such responsibility. What tragedies their word involved! The children of an old prophet tell him one night that they are going to one of these nocturnal assemblies, and that the Spirit has told them they will not return. One daughter is married and with child, yet she goes, leading her little boy. Towards midnight six corpses are brought to the old man's cabin, who, with tearless eyes, exclaims, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord!'

Gabriel, however, it is said, assured his followers that in the day of battle the Lord would protect them, so that they would escape the bullets unhurt. In this belief they met their adversaries, pouring stones down upon them, and actually gaining a temporary victory. But the soldiers returned in greater numbers, the people were driven from spot to spot. Bloody were the combats; after each fight the prisoners were hanged, until all along the heights of the Vivarais a line of corpses quivered in the wind as 'a terror to evildoers.' Gabriel himself came out alive from twenty fights, but was taken at last, and on the 2nd of April, 1690, he suffered death on the wheel at Baix.

VII.

THE SHEPHERD WHO GAVE HIS LIFE FOR THE SHEEP.

FROM the slaughter of the Protestant peasants of the Vivarais, Bâville and Broglie turned to those of the Cevennes, where the insurgents were led by a young prophet, François Vivens, weaver and school-master. In 1686 Vivens had already become so famous that Bâville entered into a treaty with him, by which he and his followers were allowed to leave the country in three bands. However, the first, under Vivens himself, was perfidiously led into Spain, where, after many difficulties, those who formed it reached the sea and embarked for Holland.

This apparent treachery caused Vivens to consider his agreement no longer binding, and early in 1689 he returned to the Cevennes and organized a new insurrection. His little army, however, fell almost at the very first into the hands of Bâville; some of his followers were slain, several were hanged, but Vivens himself escaped, and took refuge in an out-of-the-way cavern. Yet he still made himself felt. At the head of small bands he tracked out the informer, the spy, and the traitor, and, slaying them, left their bodies with a paper stating the judgment and its reasons. Here, in the summer of 1689, Claude Brousson¹ found him, and for some months shared his perils and the reproach of such association.

Brousson had had a long struggle before he could bring himself to accept a calling which could hardly fail to end in an ignominious death. But the thought of the sheep wandering in the wilderness

¹ Some account of Claude Brousson and his earlier efforts on behalf of the oppressed Huguenot Churches will be found in the previous volume of the *Reformation in France* (vol. 2 'Church History Series'), pp. 174-177.

without a shepherd had long weighed upon his heart. He made an appeal to the emigrant pastors, calling on them to return and share the sufferings of their flocks. 'Go yourself,' one replied; 'we can easily give you a call.' But it was not easy for Brousson himself to make the sacrifice; his mental sufferings brought on a fever. But he felt that his life would be taken if he did not go, and so, in the summer of 1689, he set out, and arrived in France just as the prophetic outburst had gone through its various stages and the people were engaged in struggling with the authorities. Avoiding at first the gathering of assemblies, Brousson confined himself to distributing tracts and going about from house to house reading the Scriptures. But the danger must have been great, for he shortly made his way to the cavern where Vivens was hidden. When the outlaw recognised his visitor, he was overcome with joy, fell into Brousson's arms, and wept. These two men, so different in their education, their character, and their methods of action, were evidently inspired at this moment by the same hope, the hope that Jurieu's prophecy would be realized, and that they were on the eve of beholding the triumph of the Protestant cause in France. It was in all probability this belief that drew Brousson into the dangerous position of being a party to the conspiracy by which Schomberg, son of the warrior who fell at the battle of the Boyne, was to lead an English army into the Cevennes. The letter in which Brousson showed how this might be done, and how the Cevenol Protestants would occupy Bâville's militia while the invasion took place, fell into the intendant's hands.

After such wonderful signs, and under the influence of such ideas as Jurieu's interpretations of

the Apocalypse had aroused, how could any one so sympathetic as Brousson have failed to share the popular belief that William of Orange and the English army were the instruments divinely appointed to bring about the fulfilment of this great hope? Living in the midst of a society terrorised by the wheel, the stake, the gibbet, and the galleys, seeing his fellow labourers one after the other thus prematurely cut off—Fulcran Rey, Berthezène, Boisson, and Dhombres, all suffering death in 1689; Gabriel Astier in 1690, and in the same year and the following Souveiran, Dumas, Quet, Bonnèmère, and Roussel; 10,000 livres offered for his own head; living mostly in recesses of the woods or in the mountains, sleeping on dung-heaps or upon faggots, under trees or among the brushwood, in holes of the rocks or in pits; consumed by the heat of the summer or frozen in winter with the cold, having no covering during the night or firing in the day, not even able to drag his shivering limbs to the sunlight, for fear of his enemies or false brethren, hungry and thirsty—it is not in the least surprising that he lived in a condition of mind and recognised a morality such as under other circumstances he would not have conceived possible. He was at this time wholly one in feeling with the people he came to serve. They called him to the pastoral office, and he was ordained by Vivens and Gabriel Astier.

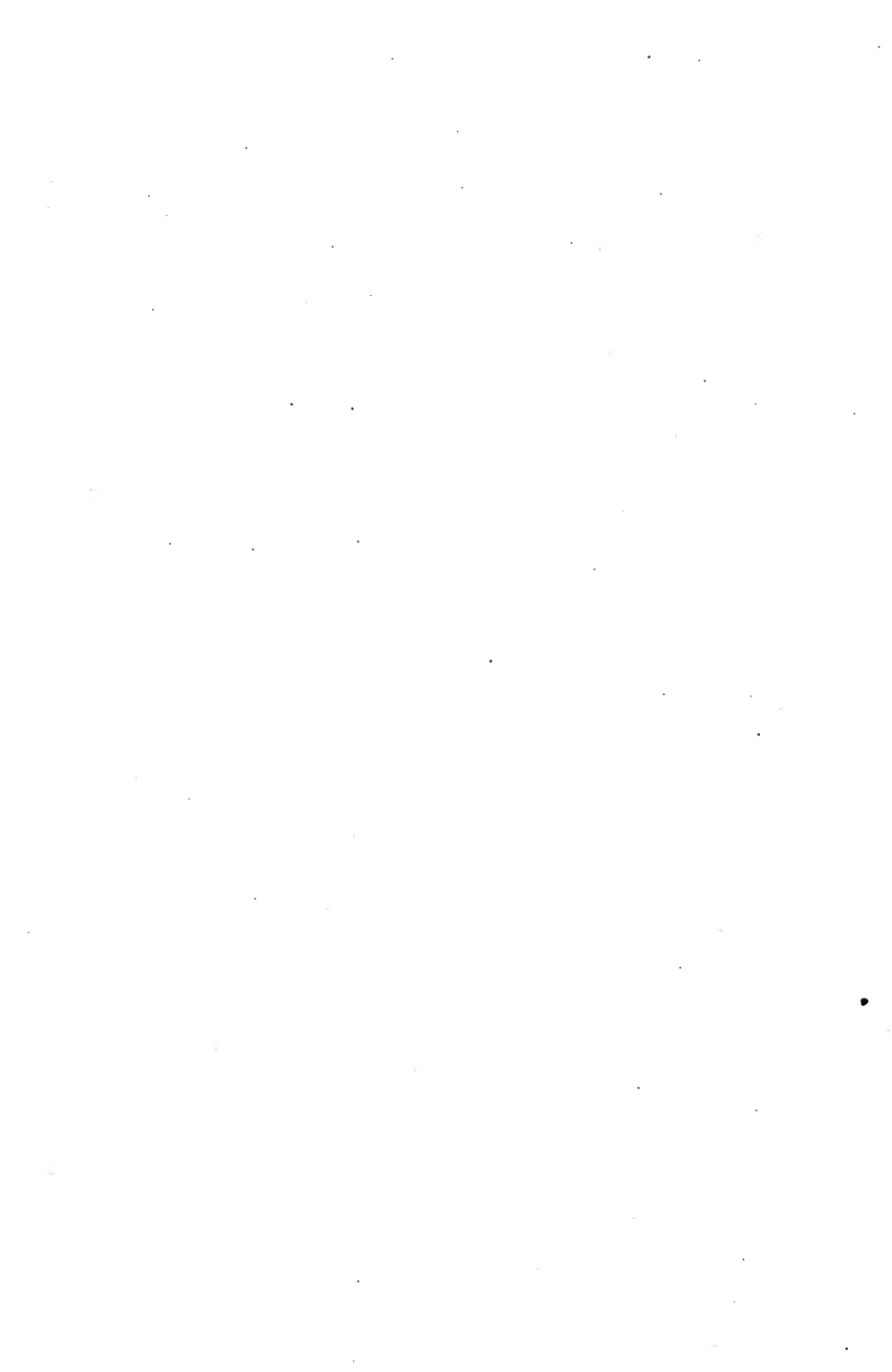
Nothing could be more spiritual than the teaching he gave the congregations that sought him out in the sheep-farm where he and Vivens came to reside. And his consolations were such as far outweighed his sufferings. The joy of seeing so many signs of the presence of the Lord, and His sympathy with His poor people, of hearing untaught, ignorant men among them praying with apostolic fervour, elo-

quence, and simplicity, of receiving everywhere tokens of boundless love from his hearers, who after every meeting threw themselves on his neck, kissing him and wishing him a thousand blessings. Another remarkable consolation was, that notwithstanding his perpetual perils, he never opened his lips in an assembly but he felt all the liberty and all the tranquillity of a man in a land of absolute freedom. And it was the same when he took up his pen to write. When we read such a sermon as that he preached more than once in the desert from the words, 'Fear not, thou worm Jacob,' we see that Brousson was not only the tenderest of pastors, but one also who could be animated with a wrath like that of Elijah against any compromise with the worship of Baal.

His career is marked by three distinct apostolates. Between the second and third, after a visit to London, he exercised the functions of a pastor over the Church at the Hague, and very soon was appointed its chief pastor. Raised to the principal seat in the synagogue, in absolute comfort, without fear for his own material future and that of his family, nothing could be more advantageous, and he seemed to have won the right to rest. But the sufferings of the poor sheep struggling among the thorns and briars in the wilderness was more to him than the ninety and nine happily folded in this safe retreat at the Hague. He could not rest, and spite of the tears of wife and children, the entreaties of the congregation, and the expostulations of his fellow ministers, he set off again for France. He passed the frontier, and after a tour through the northern provinces, during which he had hairbreadth escapes, he arrived in the south. A mistake at Pau, by which he made himself known to the wrong person, caused his arrest, and once in the hands of



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his enemies his fate was certain. He did his best by legal arguments to convince his judge, he even wrote a long letter to Louis XIV. But this was human weakness; his Divine support soon appeared when, condemned to torture and death, he was put to the question. Then he refused to utter a single word incriminating others, and he was led to execution, Bâville commuting his sentence from being broken alive and then hanged, to being hanged and broken dead.

As he approached the Place de Peyrou, then a kind of common, the Golgotha of Montpellier, he found thousands collected to witness his end. The gallows stood out against a luminous horizon, which stretched away to the sea and the sinking sun. It was four o'clock in the afternoon of November 4th, 1698, when amidst the roll of drums the martyr ascended the ladder which was to lead him to heaven. The rope broke and he fell, still alive. The priest exhorted him to accept this opportunity and to repent. But the martyr gently refused, and in a very short time he was dead. 'I have put to death 200 convicts,' said the Montpellier executioner, 'but none have ever made me tremble like M. Brousson.'

And the Roman Catholic Church of France uttered over him a magnificent requiem, for in the breviaries, the office for the day was that for the commemoration of a bishop; all the beautiful words of Holy Scripture being collected together to express what a true pastor should be; and very rarely have they been better realized than in Claude Brousson.

'No man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. Day and night sleep departed from mine eyes. And the Lord called him, and said, I have seen the affliction of My people; but I will send thee, that thou mayest

bring forth My people. This is he that was in the church in the wilderness, with the angel who spake to him in Mount Sinai. He resisted, and fought for his people, and for the justice and faith which he kept to his nation. And if he loseth one of them, he leaveth the ninety and nine in the desert, and goeth after that which is lost. The good pastor giveth his life for the sheep. He led His own people as sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock. Neither count I my life dear unto me, that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus. Now know I that the Lord saveth His anointed.'

And to this elegy of the Church the people added their own peculiar apotheosis. In the cabins of Languedoc, the story of Claude Brousson's apostolate and martyrdom, nightly repeated, almost attained a legendary halo.

'Put not your trust in princes,' was said to the Hebrews of old; 'nor in bishops,' the Huguenot martyrs might have added. At the very time Brousson was put to death, just two months before (Aug. 29th, 1698), Cardinal de Noailles, Archbishop of Paris, a just man and a good, had obtained from Louis XIV. an Edict of Reparation in favour of the Protestants, the edict demanded ten years earlier by Vauban; but the archbishop, frightened at his own act, timidly allowed the edict to remain a secret, afraid that it would embolden the Protestants. He and his Jansenist friends determined that the change should be quietly carried out. This excessive prudence destroyed its own end. Brousson and other martyrs suffered, and the Camisard War broke out, the most formidable insurrection with which Louis XIV. had ever had to contend.

VIII.

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.'

THE Cevennes form a natural citadel. Their difficult heights, the inextricable labyrinth of their gorges and defiles, afford every facility for defence. Connected with the Pyrenees on the one hand, and the mountains of the Vivarais on the other, they were just the place for a popular outburst in defence of liberty, but only on condition that the inhabitants were of one mind and remained true to each other. This, however, in the days of Louis XIV. was anything but the case. And moreover Languedoc at this time was under no feeble rule. The energy of its intendant, Bâville, ought to compel the praise of all who believe in force. To the eighty regiments of infantry at his command he added fifty more of unpaid militia. These regiments could at the first beat of the drum muster to the number of 40,000 men. He employed all the stonemasons for eleven leagues round to make roads through the Cevennes, and rendered more than a hundred footpaths fit for the passage of cannon. At the main points, the gates as it were of the district, he erected forts and barracks. This energetic work was the result of his experience of the state of the Protestant population since 1685; and he could not have done better had he foreseen exactly what was coming.

The year 1700 found this portion of his subjects quiescent; the prophetic spirit, which in the years 1688-89 had created so extraordinary a commotion, had sunk like a fountain almost to the common level. A travelling dressmaker was the first to re-introduce it into the Cevennes. The young of both sexes received it from her, and it spread like wildfire from the Lozère to the sea.

The prophetic spirit was, as on the former occasion, specially manifested in the young and the simple, in shepherds, labourers, and children. Marvellous stories were told of babes who prophesied in their cradles, and idiots who preached excellent sermons in French. 'I am one of those stones of which the Scriptures speak,' said Daniel Raoul, a young labourer, 'those who were intended to arouse you being silent. I, who do not know how to read, am sent to awaken you.'

And this voice crying in the wilderness was not a solitary one, there were 8,000 in Languedoc alone; and these 8,000 preached, not once but various times every day until the people were not only aroused from slumber, but in that condition of excitement in which ever to sleep again seems impossible. Still there was no disorder; in every assembly one took the command, and at his or her voice the other prophets were silent.

Every act was professed to be performed by inspiration. At the least sign of danger, they knelt in prayer, and if they were assured there was nothing to fear they became bold as a lion. Bâville arrested several of the young prophets, and sent for the medical faculty from Montpellier. They reported that it was a nervous affection caused by religious exaltation. Upon which Bâville thought the best regimen was to send some to prison and the galleys, and others to the gibbet and the wheel. Daniel Raoul, who suffered in the last form, and who at the beginning of his ministry had likened himself to a stone by the wayside, now compared himself to a rock of the desert, for it seemed as if his bones could not be broken. One hundred and three times was he struck with the iron bar, and yet he remained for hours, his head bent beneath his body, blood and

prayers alternately flowing from his mouth. The prophets were hanged in such numbers that the trees were said to have been laden with corpses as the vines with grapes.

But the more they suffered the more the exaltation rose, and in the spring of 1702 Abraham, Mazel, Salomon, Conderc, and Segulier were almost simultaneously seized with the conviction that they were to drive away the priests and make war on the king. Suddenly a prophet appeared whom they thought Bâville had slain. Escaped from prison, Etienne ordered them to purchase arms and gather together ammunition. 'God,' he said, 'would quickly raise up in France 40,000 prophets, and at their head a powerful prince would come.' That prince was William of Orange, and the armies would be those of the Protestant powers, England and Holland. To their advent in France they applied the words of Joel, 'Blow ye the trumpet in Zion: for as the morning spreads over the mountains, so a people great and strong shall appear. For the Lord is jealous for His land, and has pity on His people.'

The Arch-priest of the Cevennes, Du Chayla, had prisons at Pont de Montvert, where it was said that he studied to find out what amount of torture could be inflicted without killing the victim. In the arched cellars of his house he made his prisoners clench hot coals, wrapped up their fingers in cotton steeped in oil, which he then lighted, or put their legs into a horrible instrument called the squeezers. Stories of his peculiar cruelty to children were afloat, and he was accused of only allowing his female victims to escape at the price of their complete degradation. Legend no doubt rendered his figure far more monstrous than it really was, but that Du Chayla was a cruel persecutor cannot be doubted.

A little party of fugitives falling into his hands, he was about to hang the guide. An assembly was held at which a prophet with long black hair and a dreamy, mystic visage preached. 'The Lord,' said Pierre Séguier of Magistavols, 'has ordered me to take arms to deliver our captive brothers and to exterminate the arch-priest of Moloch.' The message was reiterated by the other prophets, and that same night about fifty men set off for Pont de Montvert.

Du Chayla surrounded by his little court suddenly heard the sound of psalm-singing approaching nearer and nearer. He ordered out his soldiers. It was too late, the peasants had surrounded his house. 'Withdraw, *canaille d'huguenots!*' he cried; and the soldiers fired, killing one of the insurgents. A tree was brought and the door battered in; and then the cry arose, 'Let us burn the priest and the satellites of Baal!' Chairs, beds, the forms of the chapel were heaped up, and the place was soon in flames. Du Chayla dropped himself from a window, but in so doing fractured his thigh. The blazing light pointed him out. All fell upon him crying, 'Take that for my father broken on the wheel; that for my mother, dead of a broken heart; that for my brother, sent to the galleys; that for my sister in prison or dead!' Fifty-two wounds, twenty-four of which were mortal, testified to the fury of the avengers.

The confederated peasants swept like a hurricane through the district. Dwelling in the forests on the mountain-tops, they seemed to descend as a thunderbolt from the clouds. They appeared in a village, and as it were in a moment; the priest was slain.

To have a clear idea of the locality in which this moral eruption now took place, we may roughly say the Cevennes cover the greater part of the present departments of La Lozère and Gard, and that any one

who will trace the Tarn, the Herault, the Vidoule, and the two Gardons to their sources will see at once the principal theatre of the war. The Cevennes are divided into the Upper and the Lower. The latter, rich and fertile, filled with vineyards and spoken of by the Protestants as 'Canaan,' lie chiefly between the Gardon of Andouze and the Vidoule; the former, the Upper Cevennes, between the sources of the Tarn and the fork formed by the Gardon of Alais and the Gardon of Andouze: and this is the portion we have already described as a natural citadel.

The actual scene of the outbreak was to the extreme north-east of the district just described, in the neighbourhood of Mount Lozère. Bâville soon arrived, and with him came the high noblesse of the Gevaudin, quite a troop of marquises, counts, etc. But to do the work wanted he trusted chiefly in a soldier of fortune, one Captain Poul. Accustomed to cut down Turks, this doughty champion wielded his enormous sword with such prowess that he could, it is said, cleave open the head of one foe, and immediately after slice off the head of another. The peasant-prophets were no match for such an adversary, and Séguier fell into his hands. 'Wretch,' said this Christian mameluke, 'after such crimes as yours how do you expect to be treated?' 'The same as I should have treated you were our positions reversed,' replied the heroic prophet. And with like calm dignity he answered his judges. Condemned to have his hand cut off, and to be burnt alive, he suffered at Pont de Montvert, Saturday, Aug. 12th, 1702. 'Brothers,' he said, as he stood at the stake, 'wait and hope in the Eternal. Our desolate Carmel shall yet be clothed with verdure. Our Lebanon shall once again rejoice and blossom as the rose.'

IX.

THE CAMISARD WAR.

THE Baron de Saint Cômes, who had been an elder at the Church at Nismes, but who had not only abjured, but had accepted under Bâville the colonelcy of the Nismes militia, together with a pension, was assassinated the very day after the execution of Séguier. But notwithstanding the apparent force implied in this deed, the insurrection would have ended in a fresh emigration, had not a broad-shouldered blacksmith of some position suddenly appeared among the prophets and said: 'Brothers, what are you going to do in foreign lands? Have we not a land of our own? and ought we not there to find our dwelling-places and our tombs? You say it is a land of servitude and death! Well, let us deliver it, let us deliver our oppressed brothers, let us exterminate all these priests of Baal, and raise the temples of the Eternal! Do not say, What can we do? We are so few, and have no arms. The God of armies is our strength. Let us thunder forth the battle psalm, and from the Lozère to the sea Israel will rise. And as to arms, have we not hatchets? They will give birth to muskets. Brothers, one project alone is worthy of us. It is to live and die as the liberators of our country and the avengers of the Eternal. If you wish, I will be your chief.' To which those present cried, 'Be our chief; it is the Lord's will!' Laporte took the title of 'Colonel of the Children of God,' and sent his nephew Roland to gather the people; and then, recommencing his predecessor's style of warfare, he fell on the Catholic villages, killing the priests and the Government officials. But his career was short, for he was slain in a struggle in the Valley of St. Croix (Oct.,

1702). His head and those of his companions were cut off, and sent in baskets to Bâville, who stuck them up over the citadel of Montpellier.

Laporte's place was filled by his nephew Roland, whose success in maintaining a long war against several generals, and even two marshals of France, surrounded his very existence with a halo of romance, his enemies supposing him a foreign nobleman, who had come to lead and organize the insurrection. However, this young chief, with his great eyes, his long light hair and face pitted by the small-pox, belonged in reality to a peasant family, and nothing but the influence under which he lived can explain the development of his faculties to so extraordinary degree. Under his leadership, the Protestants of five cantons of the Cevennes formed a kind of military theocracy, each canton choosing its own chief or brigadier-general, and choosing him not from any faith in his military capacity, but solely on account of his spiritual gifts.

Roland was but twenty-seven years of age, and his chief companion in arms, Cavalier, but seventeen. The son of a peasant woman who had lived upon the words of Claude Brousson, Cavalier began by tending a few sheep, and then became a baker's boy. In Nismes his enthusiasm for the Protestant cause was so marked that he had to fly to Geneva. He conceived himself directed by the Spirit to return to Languedoc. 'Master,' he said, on taking leave of his employer, 'you will hear speak of me yet.'

This youthful leader of the Protestant people of Lower Languedoc, with his ruddy cheeks and curling masses of light hair falling over his shoulders, graceful in manner, and of valour unsurpassed by any knight of romance, was the ideal of a popular hero. With Roland and Cavalier were associated Castanet,

who led the bands of Aigoal, Abraham and Salomon, who led those of the Upper Cevennes, and Joani, an old soldier, bold to temerity, who led those of La Lozère.

The number of their troops never exceeded 3,000; but they were so well organized, so completely welded into one by the extraordinary influence under which they lived, that they did as much as an army ten times their size. Very early in the struggle they had turned the immense natural caverns of the Cevennes into storehouses, where they collected their ammunition and stores. Certain caverns contained their cattle and sheep, others their grain, their wine, and their brandy; while in some were stored up their ammunition and arms. They made their own powder, and the fable of the Cyclops was actually realized in the Cevennes; for the Camisard blacksmiths were ever busy in the bowels of the earth, forging, polishing, and sharpening the Camisard bayonets and swords. Other grottoes were used as hospitals, where they carried their wounded, who were attended by two surgeons.

Notwithstanding these quite wonderful arrangements, cut off from the outer world, surrounded by enemies prepared to go any length in their destruction, they often endured the extremities of physical hardship. They rarely slept on anything better than a little straw or dried leaves, and mostly in the open air. They were often in rags, wearing out endless boots and shoes, their only consolation being their power freely to worship God. For this they had risked everything, not only ordinary comfort and security, but even morality, for in entering on such a contest they could not avoid becoming bandits. The clothes they wore were generally taken from the soldiers they had killed; the food they

ate was often pillaged; and as to their deeds, if we could forget for a moment the frightful wrongs they had suffered, and the sacred cause for which they struggled, we should conceive them a set of lawless criminals, for they spent a considerable portion of their days in falling upon Catholic towns, burning the churches and abbeys, and spreading terror and consternation everywhere. No doubt, from a soldier's point of view, their exploits were magnificent. Cavalier rivalled if he did not surpass the gallant action of Jonathan, when he surprised the Philistine garrison at Michmash. Lithe as serpents, fierce as tigers, with touches now and then of astonishing magnanimity, the Camisards recall, more even than the Covenanters, the warriors of the Old Testament. Though in principle very austere, they had quite an Oriental love of magnificent costume, high-sounding titles, and official state. Roland ate alone, and though he refused from his own followers any title but Brother Roland, to his enemies and the world at large he styled himself Generalissimo of all the Protestant forces in France and Prince of the Cevennes. Nearly all the leaders wore plumes to their hats; as to Cavalier, he is generally described as brilliantly arrayed, and as served, when such a state of things was possible, as if he were a great lord.

Their delight in religious worship was such, that the moment they had the slightest relief they held assemblies, and listened all day to their prophets praying or preaching, or engaged themselves in psalm-singing. Four times a year they held a communion service. The prophet-chief presided, assisted by the other prophets. One stood to warn those who were not in a fit state to approach the holy table. Those rejected from the communion passed away sadly, and nothing rendered them more

happy than to be forgiven, and permitted to share again in the celebration. And this power of reading the heart was sometimes used by the prophets with striking effect in the discovery of traitors.

In addition to their military duties, all the prophet-chiefs exercised, like Roland, the pastoral office, and not only administered the Lord's Supper and baptism, but performed the rites at marriages and interments.

The authorities do not seem to have realized in the least the forces with which they had to deal; Bâville believed entirely in the power of the prisons, the galleys, the gibbet, the stake, and the wheel, to overawe the common people. He was early obliged to confess that 'severity only seemed to harden them in their iniquitous courses.'

It was six months before the officials of the Government dared to breathe to Louis XIV. the terrible news that a band of peasants set his august authority at defiance. The first general sent against them was De Broglie, but he made so little way that the Marshal de Montrevel was sent in his place, with twenty cannon and 10,000 men drawn from the armies in Germany and Italy. There were now arrayed against these Protestant peasants a marshal of France, three lieutenant-generals, one of whom, Julien, was a clever and daring soldier, three major-generals, and three brigadiers, commanding in all an effective army of 60,000 men.

Unequally matched as 3,000 peasants were against such an army, by avoiding pitched battles they were able to keep up the struggle for eighteen months longer (Feb. 15th, 1703-Aug. 13th, 1704), during which time they astonished Montrevel by their daring courage and ferocious, bull-dog tenacity. This vain courtier, lost in sensuality, became horribly cruel. On Palm Sunday, 1703, finding an

assembly taking place at a miller's house in Nismes, composed mainly of women and children, he surrounded the place with a battalion of troops, set fire to the mill, and made a grand holocaust of the worshippers. As the victims tried to escape the soldiers drove them back. A valet saved a girl; the marshal hung her, and would have done the same to the valet, had not his mistress begged the man's life. 'This example,' said Bishop Fléchier, referring to the burning of the mill, 'was necessary to curb the pride of these people.'

This extraordinary inhumanity is partly to be explained by the fact that the children, and especially the girls, had become in this strange war a truly dangerous force. Julien, writing, May 4th, 1703, to the minister Chamillard, at Versailles, said: 'There are not (in Languedoc) forty truly converted, men and women included; the women and girls exhibit a force equal to that of any men. All the children born since the general conversion are more Huguenot than their fathers.'

Montrevel determined to make a desert of the country, and burn down the Protestant villages one after the other. Four hundred and sixty-six villages, hamlets, and sheep-farms were doomed; and their demolition commenced at the end of September, 1703, the soldiers being provided with hatchets, pickaxes, and levers. The Camisards made reprisals, and fell upon several Catholic villages, slaying the inhabitants. The result of Montrevel's ferocious policy was to reduce the Cevennols, Catholic as well as Protestant, to the condition of two parties of banditti, preying on each other. And this method of exterminating Protestantism was not only the idea of a military ruler, but also of the pope. In a bull published May 1st, 1703, Clement XI. preached a

crusade against the Camisards. But Bâville, the arch-persecutor, was himself beginning to waver; for when Julien said to him, 'The whole is one corrupted mass, extirpate the cancer,' he replied, 'The evil ought to be extirpated, but it is not necessary to kill the patient outright.' He said that if they really carried out this policy, there would in the end be about as few Catholics in Languedoc as Protestants.

And when by the middle of December, 1703, the advocate of extirpation had seen four hundred villages reduced to ashes, and the country for twenty leagues round a desert, even Julien himself began to doubt its policy; for, writing to Versailles, he says that 'he thinks it will not be of great use to the king after all.' Its result for the Catholics themselves comes out in Bishop Fléchier's jeremiad on the state of the district.

'The exercise of our religion is nearly abolished in three or four dioceses; more than 4,000 Catholics have had their throats cut, eighty priests have been murdered, nearly two hundred churches burnt.' Add to this a similar number of Protestants who had suffered a like fate, and the hundreds who had died cruel deaths on the gallows, at the stake, or on the wheel, together with all the villages destroyed and temples razed to the ground, and we have a commentary of the effects of the Revocation as exhibited in one province alone.

Nevertheless those who begin such courses must go on. Louis sent eleven more battalions of soldiers under the Marquis de Lalande, and Montrevel was recalled.

The war now became furious, and the year 1704 opened badly for the Camisards, Cavalier and Roland and Salomon, one after the other, being defeated. For not only was the royal army strengthened in numbers, but the new commanders were superior men.

Marshal Villars, the opponent of Marlborough and Prince Eugène, one of the most illustrious generals of this great military epoch, had been at last sent to do battle with a blacksmith and a baker's boy. He had an opportunity of testing the military abilities of the latter at the combat at Nages, and when he saw the manœuvres of Cavalier and his marvellous courage, for he had two horses shot under him, Villars exclaimed, 'Truly this is worthy of Cæsar!' Abraham and Salomon had shown like ability in a combat in which they had defeated De Broglie; and all the Camisard leaders displayed the same surprising cleverness and courage. Their followers attributed it to the direct inspiration of the Spirit. 'They had,' says one of them, 'no knowledge of war nor of anything else. All they had was given them miraculously on the field.'

But the trial of this faith came, when instead of partial success, there was everywhere universal failure. Doubt began, and demoralization followed. This greatly helped Villars in the object he had in view. For, in spite of the bishops, in spite even of Bâville, whose whole idea was the vindication of the law, Villars had determined to try conciliation. He first approached Cavalier, and through Lalande showed the young leader extraordinary confidence. The marquis and Cavalier met on equal terms, and the latter stated his demands: Liberty of conscience, deliverance of all the Protestants condemned to the galleys; and if the first demand could not be granted, then liberty for 10,000 persons to leave the kingdom.

While this public treaty was being negotiated, efforts were made privately to seduce Cavalier. He was promised the colonelcy of a regiment of Camisards that he was to be allowed to form, and even to be introduced to the king. The young

prophet's vanity was not able to withstand such proofs of personal interest on the part of a person so distinguished as Marshal Villars, and he accordingly consented to write a humble letter of submission to Versailles.

The 16th of May, 1704, Cavalier met Villars in Nismes, at a spot nearly opposite the Maison Carré, called the Garden of the Récollets. He came in state, his suite and the royal generals who accompanied him making a procession through Nismes. On meeting the marshal he affected in all things perfect equality. Bâville, Lalande, and the governor of Nismes were all present. Cavalier demanded liberty of conscience. 'The king,' said the marshal, 'will grant it. You can assemble where you chose, to pray after your own manner; but he will never permit you to rebuild your temples. After having taken arms against his Majesty, this grace ought to suffice you; if you refuse it, the king will know very well how to bring you to your duty.' On leaving, the marshal saluted him graciously: 'Adieu,' he said, 'Lord Cavalier.'

Lord Cavalier in his turn saluted the multitude with the air of one born to rule, and going to an hotel was served in keeping with his position. Then, attended by two Camisards, who preceded him with drawn sabres, he visited the mother of Daniel, his favourite prophet, and after having received some admirers he left Nismes, intoning the psalm, 'Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!' That evening at supper he prayed for the king, for Villars, for Lalande, and for Bâville even, and for all his enemies. He was only nineteen years of age, and this sudden change from playing the rôle of Ishmael to that of Joseph turned his head.

The treaty was signed on the 17th of May, and contained not only the formal admission of liberty of conscience throughout the province, and the right to hold assemblies in any place outside fortified places and walled cities, but it also promised the liberation of all prisoners and galley-slaves suffering for the cause of religion since the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

Roland, however, flatly refused to confirm the treaty, and Cavalier's own followers turned upon their leader. He went to Roland to try and convince him, but the latter said bitterly, 'Thou art mad; thou hast forgotten that I am thy chief; thou hast betrayed thy brothers, and thou oughtest to die with shame.' When he returned to his own camp, he found himself in effect deposed; the inflexible Ravenal had taken his place. Catinat called him a traitor; and he was only saved from the muskets of the Camisard warriors by Moses, who threw himself in front of the fallen hero. They were justified in their wrath. Cavalier, seduced by his vanity, had made a treaty without consulting his comrades, a treaty for which there was no guarantee. His conduct was ruinous. It at once stopped the efforts being made in England and Holland to help the Camisards, and the Protestant powers ended by merely encouraging in an underhand manner a descent on the coast at Aigues-Mortes. This expedition was dispersed by a storm, and came to nothing.

Roland, who had five times refused the overtures of the authorities, felt that this last stroke was the death-knell of the struggle; he continued, however, to resist, but was finally sold to Villars by his own confidential agent for 100 louis d'or. He was to have been arrested at the Château of Castelnau; however, he and some of his followers just had time

to throw themselves half-dressed on some unsaddled horses. But the animals proving unmanageable their riders sprang off, and fled down a deep and narrow road. The dragoons were soon upon them; a desperate fight ensued. Roland was killed, and his fellow prophets then resigned themselves to their fate (Aug. 14th, 1704). Roland's head was cut off,¹ and his body dragged through Nismes, attached to a car drawn by oxen. His five companions were all broken alive in the presence of Fléchier and four other prelates (Aug. 16th).

The rest of the prophets fled to Geneva, where they were received with curiosity rather than sympathy. To the respectable Protestants engaged in the ordinary avocations of commerce, and accustomed only to the recognised forms of worship, these wild-looking men, unused to being in houses, ready to pray anywhere and in a manner so peculiar, believing themselves in constant communication with heaven, were more scandalous than agreeable, and Geneva finally refused them an asylum.

The Protestant powers had refrained from helping the Camisards when that help might have raised them from the condition of banditti to belligerents bound by the laws of war, and have given French Protestantism a fair chance of obtaining a properly guaranteed reversal of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Now the Protestant powers wickedly

¹ 'We have just learnt the departure for a better world of Mme. Laporte-Cabanis at the age of seventy-two. She lived in the hamlet of Mialet (Gard), in the house of the *Camisard Roland*, from whose family she was descended. In remembrance of this Protestant hero, his Bible, his psalter, and his lance are still preserved; for, as David of old, he knew how to sing hymns in fighting for Israel.'—*L'Evangeliste*, Nov. 18th, 1875. (Quoted in *Bulletin de l'Histoire du Protestantisme François*, vol. xxv., p. 48.)

used these poor fugitives to raise another insurrection in Languedoc. Some of the leaders accordingly returned and commenced again to conspire. Discovered and arrested, Castanet was broken on the wheel (March 26th, 1705), and Catinat, Vilas, Ravenal, and Jonguet, all suffered the same fate, Wednesday, April 22nd, 1705.

‘Never,’ says Louvroleuil, the Catholic chronicler, who is the chief authority for the facts of this history, ‘was the terror of the Protestants greater.’ ‘And,’ says a Nimois monastic of the same time, ‘the execution of these four chiefs of the fanatics produced a sensation so much the more great and general, as *three-fourths of Nismes were for them.*’

Cavalier saw the king, but was treated with little ceremony; he never got his regiment nor the fulfilment of his treaty, and finally came to England, where he entered the British army, and died Governor of Jersey. On being introduced to Queen Anne, she said, ‘Does God visit you now, Monsieur Cavalier?’ The young Camisard dropped his head and was silent.

X.

THE LAST OF THE CAMISARDS.

NOTWITHSTANDING the terrible prospect before them, one after the other the dispersed prophets returned to the Cevennes, and commenced to plan fresh risings. Salomon arrived in February, 1706. He was taken and burnt by order of Bâville (March 3rd), his two companions being hanged. Claris, the wonder-worker, who in the eighteenth century had challenged and had come out unhurt from the ordeal of fire—such, at least, was the astonishing story which, with minute detail, was related by eye-witnesses at the time—Claris and Montbonneux now

maintained themselves in the heart of the Cevennes by terrific acts of vengeance against those who gave information or in any way acted against them. For, day by day, Bâville was exterminating the last remains of the prophets. Fidel, a prophet, was taken in a widow's house, in May. He fought desperately, but he was finally killed, and his hostess hanged; and Moses, who had been a prophet in the army of Roland, was broken alive at Montpellier, June 4th.

Undeterred by all this sad history, Miremont and Cavalier planned, in 1709, another rising in the Cevennes, of which Abraham was to be the leader. He entered the Vivarais, and sought out Paul Eltrui, the most influential of the prophets in the canton, who said to him, 'Renounce your project, my brother; you will find no partisans.' But proceeding farther, Abraham was joined by Just, a kind of Samson among the Camisards; and two prophetesses went to warn Claris and Montbonneux. On May 12th, 1709, the new leader issued a manifesto, declaring war to the priests, alliance with all discontented with the state of things then existing, liberation of all Protestants in prison, and that the sword should never be sheathed until all these things were attained. Abraham's tactics were those of his predecessors: sudden descents on the enemy, sustained by dauntless courage and terrific prowess. The intimate knowledge of the country after so many campaigns enabled the Camisards, by the rapidity of their movements, to appear almost ubiquitous. Bâville had only some Irish and Swiss regiments, and the latter, after the first fight, absolutely refused to fire. At last the royalist troops drew the Camisards into an engagement on the mountain of Issolets, and broke their ranks by a charge with the bayonet. Rallied by a prophet in a long black robe,

they returned to the struggle, fighting with pitchforks, hatchets, and stones. Just did prodigies of valour. He rushed into the enemy's ranks, and single-handed seized the royal standard and tore it down. Two dragoons followed him as he bounded back to his own people; but he turned upon them, and, seizing them by the hair, knocked their heads together so violently as to stun them both. But the battalion threw itself upon the audacious Camisard, who fell at last under his wounds, his gigantic body smothering the two prostrate dragoons. 'These rascals fight like Romans.' Such was the admiring testimony the desperate courage of these poor Camisards evoked even from their enemies.

Abraham escaped, and with a few followers ran up and down the country, doubling and redoubling. Finally he was forced into a fight, in which another famous prophet, Daniel, was slain. But the end could not be far off. Abraham and Claris were surrounded in a house at Uzès, October 17th, 1710. Abraham was killed, and his head burned at Vernoux, in the Vivarais; Claris, taken alive, was broken on the wheel at Montpellier, October 25th.

Thus perished the Camisard prophets. With a few exceptions, all came to a violent end. Their terrible enemy, Bâville, quitted Languedoc in 1718, after having executed about 12,000 Cevennols; this long martyrology, commencing with the young student Fulcran Rey, ended in 1718 with the youthful pastor Etienne Arnaud.

If ever stern, unyielding legality had its representative, it was in Bâville. To struggle for long years with a foe so relentless, so pitiless, is a stronger testimony to the moral force behind this Camisard revolt than its struggle with the armies of Louis XIV. and the marshals of France. Bâville worked

like a machine to execute the law ; but what was that law ? The will of Louis. His inflexible severity was highly appreciated at Versailles, for the king maintained him as ruler of Languedoc for three and thirty years. On Louis XIV. therefore falls the responsibility of hanging, breaking alive on the wheel, or burning to death 12,000 of his subjects in one province alone.

Speaking of the defeat of the allies by Marshal Villars at Denain, in 1712, the Duke of St. Simon says of Louis XIV. : ‘ Conducted unto the brink of the abyss, with the dreadful leisure of thoroughly studying its depth, the all-powerful Hand, which has only placed a few grains of sand as the bounds of the most furious storms of the ocean, stopped all of a sudden the final ruin of this proud monarch, after having made him taste in deep draughts his weakness, poverty, nothingness ! ’

What political blows had Louis to sustain from the time he signed that fatal Edict of the Revocation ! The English Revolution of 1688, with the flight of his hireling James II., and the ascent to the throne of England of his indefatigable foe, William of Orange ; the destruction of the French fleet at La Hogue in 1692, which henceforth left England the unchallenged mistress of the seas ; the Peace of Ryswick in 1698, by which, notwithstanding all his victories, Louis was obliged to recognise William, and to promise to make no attempts against the settlement of 1689 ; Blenheim in 1703, Ramillies and Turin in 1705. Louis was losing all the prestige he had so laboriously gained. He was on the brink of political extinction.

But more appalling—if his proud heart could have adequately felt his people’s woes—was the social ruin now coming on France by rapid strides.

Jurieu's *Sighs of Enslaved France* tells us of the loss of liberty, Boisguilbert's *Reveil de France* of the material ruin this loss of liberty entailed. The people were so oppressed with burdens that they could neither buy nor sell, nor even labour. The taxes swallowed up everything, and nobody was benefited but those who enriched themselves out of the taxes. And this universal impoverishment had reached the nobility, who by the end of the reign of Louis XIV. were ruined. While they wasted their time and their money at Versailles, their men of business sucked the marrow out of their estates. Hogarth's 'Calais Gate' seems an ignorant caricature to those who only know Frenchmen of the nineteenth century. But those wretched starveling natives, shivering in the presence of the stalwart English soldiers, and the contrast between their *soupe maigre* and the great round of English beef was true historically, and forcibly depicts the cruel misery to which Louis XIV.'s insensate pride reduced the people of France.

This misery probably touched zero during the severe winter of 1709: a season so mild that the trees began to bud, suddenly ended by a frost so severe that the rivers were frozen; and even in the south the cold was so great and so prolonged that it killed the vines, the olives, and the mulberry trees, and even the seed already in the earth. It was not the worst winter ever known in France, but it was rendered one of the most frightful by the extreme poverty of the people. Even in Normandy the people generally had nothing to lie on but straw; they were clad in canvas, and were too poor and disheartened to repair their miserable dwellings. There were no beasts in their stables, all were empty. In some places corn was heaped up in excess, but owing to

the taxes on circulation there it remained, though the people in a neighbouring province were starving. The Parisians began to get furious in their misery, and posters appeared on the walls of Paris hinting that there yet might be a Ravaiillac wanted. On the 30th of April the dauphin, the Duchess of Burgundy, and the ex-king of England, James II., going to the opera, were mobbed by a vast crowd of 40,000 people, who insisted on showing them the bread they had to eat, manufactured of the strangest materials. The Archbishop of Paris ordered fasts and processions; Mme. de Maintenon herself ate rye-bread; and the king sent his plate and even his silver throne to the Mint.

But he was plagued not only in his kingdom but in his family and his own person. His eldest son, the dauphin, and his eldest grandson, the Duke of Bretagne, both died in 1711. His next grandson, the new dauphin, the Duke of Bourgogne, and his young wife, both died of scarlet fever early in 1712. Then another son of the king, the Duke of Ecric, died; so that the Grand Monarque had for successor his great-grandson, a mere infant. Added to this, he himself was the subject of painful and loathsome disease. And as if to destroy for ever the legend of that glory to which he had sacrificed so much, his physician kept a diary, in which all the petty miseries which a diseased body passes through are exactly and scrupulously chronicled. Thus the physical degradations to which he put thousands of better men than himself Louis XIV. has now to endure to the end of time.

‘Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small;
Though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness grinds He all.’

BOOK II.

FROM THE END OF THE CAMISARD WAR TO THE EDICT OF TOLERATION.

I.

THE HUGUENOT NEHEMIAH.

By the year 1713, the authorities, especially those who directed the police, seem to have recognised that this attempt to compel men by force to do what their rulers thought right had proved a total failure. Voyer d'Argenson, Louis XIV.'s lieutenant of police, reported strongly against it with reference to Paris. Bâville wrote: 'There are districts of twenty and thirty parishes where the curé is the most unhappy and the most useless of all the inhabitants, and where, whatever pains are taken, it is impossible to make a single Catholic, or even to establish one among them from without.' Thus under the most powerful, the most despotic, and the most remorseless of monarchs, the will of a few poor peasants, bound together by a common faith, was sufficient to prove a rock against which all the forces of the kingdom might dash themselves in vain.

The representatives of religious despotism were not, however, equally convinced. Massillon scorned the weakness of statesmen who faltered in their faith in the policy of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, because of the material evil it had wrought,

while he glorified the immovable constancy of the monarch who tenaciously maintained to the last his right to compel his subjects to be of the true religion.¹ The position of the king became more and more pitiable. Deprived one after another of the great men who had reflected so much glory on his reign, getting dull of mind, and duller still of heart, he fell in his last days into the hands of the Jesuit Letellier, who, according to St. Simon, had a face that one would not have liked to have met in a corner of a wood; an obstinate, narrow-minded man, stern and cruel by nature. Louis, hard enough at all times, under this influence became absolutely stone-like, and sent forth a decree which made even Versailles statesmen shudder. All Protestants, whether they had abjured or not, were henceforth to be regarded as Catholics, and to be considered as relapsed, and subjected to frightful penalties if they refused the sacraments. The monstrous character of this decree was rendered, if possible, more evident by the proof adduced of its reasonableness. For a Protestant to have resided in the dominions of Louis XIV., for the child of Protestant parents to have been born into them, since the exercise of the Reformed religion was abolished, this alone was sufficient proof that they had embraced the Roman Catholic religion, for *otherwise they would have been neither suffered nor tolerated.*

The date of this law was March 8th, 1715. In September 1st of the same year, Louis XIV. went to his account.

Nearly thirty years had passed away since Protestants had been assured that it was all over with their religion, that its existence was only a matter

¹ Sermon on the death of Louis XIV.

of a few months ; but although the most powerful monarch in Europe had brought all the forces and all the terrors of despotism to bear upon it without intermission during the whole of that period, the religion he wished to extirpate survived him, and in less than a year after his death had taken a new start. Certainly at that moment it must have seemed to all, whether friends or foes, at the lowest point of its existence. Long years of cruel persecution had driven it into a struggle which had ended in defeat and ignominy, and now its ashes emitted little more than smoke. Some one was needed who would courageously rake together the few sparks yet ardent, and carefully watch them until they once again ascended in a living flame.

Antoine Court was devoted to the ministry before his birth, which event took place at Villeneuve-de-Berg about 1696. His father dying when he was quite a child, the prospect of the realization of his parents' wishes seemed doubtful ; but his mother, though a widow in a certain degree of poverty, was a strong character. She took her little son to school, when he was seven, recommending the regent not to spare the rod. The child had a will of his own ; for when his schoolfellows tried to force him to go to mass, he threw himself on some stairs, and stuck to them with such tenacity that four boys, all tugging together, could not drag him off. In revenge, they nicknamed him *Fils ayné de Calvin*—Calvin's eldest son. His education was of the poorest. Nevertheless, at seventeen years of age he was not only preaching, but he had formed the project of restoring the old organization of the Reformed Churches of France by means of the re-establishment of synods and the appointment of pastors and elders. Gifted with a firm will, a clear

mind, great physical energy, an authoritative temper, and a cool and audacious spirit, Court went warily from step to step, commencing by collecting a congregation, which he led from cavern to cavern. The ruin of the Camisard cause had produced scepticism in the new generation, which had never felt the prophetic inspiration. With scepticism came questioning, watching, testing; and the prophecies coming to naught under this critical spirit, Court was convinced that they were illusions, and ought to be withstood.

Leaving the Vivarais, he came into the Cevennes, and from the Cevennes into Lower Languedoc, where in 1715, at the age of nineteen, he was called to the pastorate of the church at Nismes—a proof that the bulk of the people were with him. However, no position could be more arduous, for in addition to the gallows which continually menaced him, his flock were, from his own point of view, to a very large extent hypocrites or fanatics. His remedy was to revive the old order and discipline, and to this end he convoked a synod, which illegal assembly, the first held for thirty years, took place, August 21st, 1716, in an old Roman quarry in the neighbourhood of Nismes. Two prophets, Huc and Vesson, were present, the other members being as young or younger than Court: Etienne Arnaud, a young man, Jean Cralle, a youth, and Pierre Durand, who was not yet seventeen years of age. Truly audacious, from a human point of view, was the task these young Cevennol peasants undertook—no less than the restoration to life and health of the Reformed Churches of France, at that moment reduced to the last extremity. French Protestantism, pierced with a thousand wounds, and bleeding from every pore, had suddenly been seized with that

sevenfold energy that comes on the dying warrior, and had played the man in a way that extorted the admiration of its foes. In the fearful prostration that followed, death seemed the only too probable result. However, these courageous youths, not only dared to undertake the cure, but actually applied the remedy needed at such a crisis. Well might Court, notwithstanding his cool, critical temper, find in the providential history of the church of his fathers the chief support of that extraordinary courage which for so many years he continued to exhibit.

This synod, taking all its conditions into account, can hardly have had its equal in the history of any church. Six roughly clad men or youths tramp the livelong night to the trysting-place. At dawn the brown blouses of these Cevennol peasants stand out in relief against the glistening white walls of the quarry. Lifting their low, broad-brimmed hats, and laying down their satchels and green oaken staves, they kneel to invoke the presence of the Holy Spirit. Then Court, standing up in their midst, describes the ruin into which their churches have fallen. All present agree to act as overseers, to watch both flocks and pastors, undertaking to procure for the latter faithful guides and safe asylums, to convoke secret assemblies, and to collect aid for their brothers on the galleys.

Proceeding to regulate worship, they ordain that women shall no longer preach, that ecstasy is forbidden, that the positive text of the Bible alone is to be the rule of faith, assemblies are only to be held fortnightly, the sermon not to exceed one hour and a quarter in length, improvization is not to be allowed, and no sermon, in fact, to be delivered which has not been previously examined by a committee. Heads of families are to be exhorted to celebrate domestic

worship three times a day, and to devote to it two hours every Sunday. Those who commit grave faults are to be privately admonished three times, then openly censured. Pastors are carefully to explain the articles of religion, and to inform themselves of the particular vices of any locality, so as to meet them with some remedy. They are to assemble together every six months, and exhort one another; and if any pastor gives cause for scandal, he is to be deposed. Finally, they bind themselves to help all who suffer for the cause of religion, but not those who expose themselves carelessly.

At another synod, March 2nd, 1717, the assembly was joined by Montbonneux, the friend of the prophets Ravenal and Claris, and at one time united with the latter in acts of terror. Thus the attitude of the restorers of Calvinistic discipline was by no means one of antagonism towards the Camisard theocracy.

After this synod Court sent Pierre Corteis to be consecrated at Zurich according to the Helvetic rite, Corteis consecrating Court in a synod held February 7th, 1718. Forty-five members were present, and a number of spectators. A procession was formed led by Corteis, wearing the pastoral robe. He then went into a pulpit, and preached a sermon on the ministry; after which he descended and placing his hands on the head of Court, who knelt before him, he transmitted to him in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit the right he had himself received to administer the holy supper, to baptize children, and to solemnize marriages. After this he gave the new pastor the fraternal kiss, the members of the synod each giving him the right hand of fellowship, the people meanwhile rising and with hands upraised in gratitude to heaven singing the 122nd psalm.

All this indicates a certain relaxation in the intolerance of the authorities. The regent, Philippe d'Orleans, was tolerant by nature, and the new Bishop of Nismes (1710), Rousseau de la Parisien, was intelligent and moderate, devoting himself to guiding his own people rather than troubling the Protestants. Bâville, however, still ruled, and on the 24th of January, 1718, he hung Etienne Arnaud. Huc and Vesson shared the same fate in 1728, and Durand in 1732. Thus out of the six who formed the first synod four died on the scaffold; and it was this prospect, which they had all before them as they knelt in the quarry, which gave sublimity to their proceedings and a sacredness none could gainsay.

The civil authorities, indeed, even after Bâville's retirement, did not allow the law to become a dead letter.

An assembly held during the night of the 14-15 Jan., 1720, in the Solitary Valley of the Cavern of the Fairies (*baume di Fades*), and over which Court presided, was denounced by a traitor named Gras. Two companies of soldiers sent to dissolve it arrested twenty-five men and as many women, and a child of ten, all of whom were taken to prison. Three of the women were sent to the Tower of Constance, where there were others, devoured by vermin, covered with rags and looking like skeletons. Three old men were sent to the galleys. Nineteen men were to be transported to the colony of New Orleans, on the borders of the Mississippi, founded at this time as part of the scheme of the financier Law.

The day of their departure for La Rochelle, June 14th, 1720, they were all bound together with a great chain like galley slaves, surrounded by soldiers, who conducted them by stages, shutting them up every night in stables, where they had to sleep on

the dung. Although the rain was coming down in such torrents as they entered Nismes that they were wet to the skin, they took off their hats as they passed through the suburbs and sang a psalm. The people crowded into the streets, silent and weeping, but none were allowed to come near to give them a farewell kiss. On July 5th they left Lyons in the chain of convicts from Burgundy, and arrived at La Rochelle, where they nearly all fell ill with malignant fever. Some died, several having as many as five relapses. Finally their case was taken up by a few friends at Paris, at the head of which was Sutton, the English ambassador, and after interminable delays, their punishment was commuted to banishment to England. The ambassador sent his chaplain to conduct them on board a vessel, and four thousand persons gathered at the port to see them pass, uncovering their heads and crying, 'Adieu, dear brothers; may the Lord be with you, and give you a safe journey!'

II.

'CAPITAL IS PROTESTANT.'

THE Camisard war resembled in spirit that waged by the Maccabees against Antiochus Epiphanes. In both cases the insensate pride of a despot led him to trample on the soul of a people by attempts to suppress a worship which symbolized for them all that was glorious in their history and in the universe, arousing a spirit of resistance which gave birth to warriors and to martyrs, and culminated in terrific acts of vengeance.

And at the same time another aspect of Jewish character, its power of wealth-making, even when most depressed, is seen to be that of the French

Protestants. Michelet exclaims, 'Capital of no religion!—a mistake, capital is Protestant.' In the latter period of the reign of Louis XIV. a Protestant and a Jew supported with their capital the court and army of France. Flying from Lyons at the Revocation, the bookseller Huguetan made a great fortune in Holland by dealing in missals and breviaries, and then went on to render himself a millionaire by loans to the despot who was crushing his co-religionists. Few stories are more romantic in the annals of crime than the plots framed at Versailles to force Huguetan to yield up his gains to replenish the empty exchequer. He wandered from country to country, pursued by his own fears and the machinations of the French controller-general. At last he finds a refuge in Denmark, where all he touches turns to gold. Living in great magnificence, and ever increasing his wealth, he is made Count of Guldestein by Frederick IV., and dies of grief, so the story spitefully goes, at the age of one hundred and three, because he could not obtain the blue ribbon of the Order of the Elephant.

Another example of the same period is Samuel Bernard, who amassed a fortune of thirty-three millions of livres by financial speculation. He was one of the Protestant notables of Paris, tricked by the Marquis of Seignelay at the time of the Revocation into signing an abjuration. However, his conversion proved profitable to himself, and useful to the refugees, for he acted as a middleman between those who had anything to sell and the Catholics who wished to buy. He too lent his money to Louis to carry on his wars, and on one occasion, when the *Grande Monarque* was hard pressed, he invited Bernard to Marly, and himself did the honours of host to the quondam Protestant banker.

The period was propitious for the rise of such men as Huguetan and Bernard, for not only were the king and the nobility in difficulties, but the State itself was on the brink of bankruptcy. It was this condition of affairs that rendered the French government so willing to listen to the schemes of John Law, who in the full tide of his credit in Paris (Nov., 1719) abjured Protestantism, that he might become Controller-general of the Finances. Thus, when Antoine Court was facing the gallows in his anxious attempts to rebuild the Huguenot Zion, Catholic France was going stark mad over the Mississippi scheme; the chief thought of every one, from the highest to the lowest, being to make a fortune with the utmost rapidity; and in this commercial maelström the centres of the whirlpools were Protestants or descendants of Protestants.

III.

THE DRACONIAN LAW OF 1724.

UNDER the Duke of Bourbon, a ruler worthy to preside over this society of *roués* and gamblers, an atrocious edict, dated May 24th, 1724, was promulgated against the Protestants. It united all the worst provisions of all the former laws intended to coerce the Protestants into civil and religious unity, and in so doing it mingled two opposite systems of persecution. At the time of the Revocation, under the influence of the Jesuits, the one idea was to obtain abjurations, and any form of adhesion was accepted. But later on the clergy, coming under the influence of Jansenism, would only administer the sacraments to those who gave proof of being sincere Catholics. Thus one set of authorities required acts under heavy pains and penalties,

which another set would only allow to be performed sincerely and conscientiously.

By this new code Protestant children were to receive baptism within twenty-four hours after notice by the curé of the parish, then to be sent to a Catholic school until fourteen years of age, and until twenty to attend instruction on Sundays and fête days. Midwives were to announce births to the curé, and all doctors, surgeons, and apothecaries to inform him of any new converts seriously ill, and the priest to see them alone. Refusal of the sacraments rendered the sick man liable to the barbarous penalties of relapse into heresy. Holding religious services entailed galleys for life for men, perpetual imprisonment for women; the same for harbouring a preacher or giving him any aid whatsoever, or even neglecting to denounce him; while preaching itself was a capital crime.

Voltaire began to come into note about this time, and it is impossible to deny that he was wanted. No weapon but ridicule could touch such insensate tyranny.

One of the first results was that the law was only partially executed, the Government itself conniving. This inequality in the action of the law rendered it more odious, and even created contempt, so that Protestant children made game of the priests in church, and disturbed their sermons. However, there were convictions and executions, which show it was far from being regarded as a dead letter. In 1725, four inhabitants of Alais were sent to the galleys for attending an assembly; and in 1726 five suffered the same penalty for the same crime, several women being imprisoned in the Tower of Constance. And these are only examples, for many assemblies were surprised, and those arrested suffered the legal

penalty. On the 30th of November, 1728, Alexander Roussel was hanged as a preacher. The details have been handed down in two ballads of the time; one relates his capture and death, the other the grief of his mother. From them we learn that through the treachery of some companion he was seized in the neighbourhood of Aulas and taken before the sub-delegate of Le Vigan. On being asked in what places he had preached, he replied, 'Wherever I found an assembly of Christians.' 'Where is your dwelling-place?' 'Under the vault of heaven.' While in confinement in the citadel of Montpellier, his mother went to her foster-son, the Duke of Uzès, who was a peer of France, and besought him to interfere on behalf of her child. 'I can do nothing for him unless he abjures,' said the duke. 'For any other crime than religion I would make an effort willingly.' And the duke advised him to feign madness; but Roussel replied, 'I was never more in my senses in my life, and my conscience would not allow me to do so.' He went to the scaffold as if he were going to a fête, calm, gentle, and modest. He was twenty-six years of age.

IV.

THE EXECUTION OF PIERRE DURAND.

ROUSSEL was put to death for preaching; but the solemnization of matrimony was in the eyes of the bishops of Languedoc quite as great a scandal. The worthy artisans and peasants in their dioceses who, refusing to enter 'the temple of the idol,' sought the cavern of some hidden pastor, and in the depths of the woods or in some high place solemnly invoked, by the medium of their old liturgies, and according

to the patriarchal customs of their fathers, the blessing of God on their marriages, were described as living in concubinage, and giving birth to bastards; and the pastors were pursued to the death as the primary source of this disorder. But it was most difficult to contend with a whole population in conspiracy to defeat the law; and although the bishops were constantly urging more severity, the authorities had continually to recede or lessen their rigour. At last, in 1750, the episcopacy had its wish, and the whole matter was placed in the hands of military authority. What were the lives and liberties of Christian men compared to the grand idea of the unity of France, civil and religious?

It seems hardly credible that in the last century Christian ministers were publicly hanged at a famous health resort, where wealthy English people lived, just as they do to-day at Nice or Cannes. But here are the words of the judgment on Pierre Durand, who was executed the same day, April 22nd, 1732, on the esplanade at Montpellier.

‘We, the intendant aforesaid, with the advice of the undersigned officers of the presidial of Montpellier, have declared, and do declare the said Pierre Durand duly attainted and convicted of having controvened the declarations of the king, and notably of the years 1686 and 1724, in taking and bearing in the kingdom the quality of minister of the pretended Reformed religion, and of having exercised its functions in the Vivarais; for reparation of which we have condemned, and do condemn, the said Pierre Durand to be hanged to a gallows raised for the purpose on the esplanade of this city, and strangled, until natural death follows therefrom.’

Pierre Durand was the youngest of the six persons who met in 1716 to restore the Reformed churches

of France. Born in 1700, he received Catholic baptism as an infant, and was submitted to Catholic teaching and forced attendance at the parish church until he was fifteen years of age. Then he acted for himself, and the acting was in direct opposition to the instruction he had received. Although he preached with the best results, he was not ordained as a pastor until he was twenty-six, and he was married the same year. He was so esteemed as to be chosen again and again the moderator of the provincial synods. He was in consequence a mark for the authorities, and they set a price on his head. Finding they could not capture him, they threw his father into prison, in order that they might barter the parent's liberty against the son's exile from France. Three thousand livres being now offered for his head, certain people were corrupted, and Pierre Durand fell into the hands of the soldiers as he was passing through a wood about eleven o'clock one night. His capture cost the Government 5,984 livres 12 sous. Baptizing children and solemnizing marriages were among his chief offences, and after futile efforts to extract an abjuration he was condemned to death. Compelled to kneel to hear the sentence read, four hours only were allowed him before its execution. At the end of the third hour the executioner came to bind him, and he was led out of prison, singing a psalm of mercy and grace. It was raining heavily, nevertheless there was an immense crowd, wrapped in cloaks and carrying umbrellas. Twelve or fourteen drummers preceded him, in order to drown his voice should he attempt to speak. He, poor man, was not arrayed in a very dignified manner, for he was without a coat and in his slippers, and nothing on his head but his peruke. As the executioner tried to push him off, a priest

ascended the ladder ; Durand made a gesture with his feet, his arms being pinioned, and cried, ' Away ! away ! ' He died without a struggle, sincerely pitied by the vast crowd of feeble citizens, who hid their emotions under the umbrellas.

At twelve o'clock on Tuesday, April 22nd, 1732, being shortly after Pierre Durand had received sentence, and knew that he must die at three o'clock that same afternoon, the priests in France were reading in their breviaries these words: ' For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh ' (2 Cor. iv. 11).

And when at the time appointed the servant of Jesus Christ stood at the top of the ladder, with the rope round his neck, the words the Gallican Church called on its priests to utter proved that they were not left without Divine teaching, though probably in a form they did not expect, and were too blind to see, for the words they had to read at Nones were these :

' So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory ' (1 Cor. xv. 54).

And the authorities, affected by the sympathy of the public, or in accordance with the prevalence of more humane sentiments, quickly cut down the body, and gave it honourable burial ; a fact which this wonderfully prophetic service, which, as ever, was in all its parts a Divine elegy over this victim of Church and State's barbarous injustice, had in its opening lines declared would be the case.

' Let us now praise the men of renown. . . . Their bodies are buried in peace, and their name

liveth unto generation and generation" ¹ (Ecclus. xliv. 1, 14).

V.

THE BLOOD OF THE MARTYRS IS THE SEED OF THE CHURCH.

THE commiseration shown by the public at Montpellier for the martyr Durand illustrates what was happening in France. The national intelligence was rising in the degree that that of the Government was falling. Louis XIV. had only been dead six years when Montesquieu published his *Lettres Persanes*. In them he proclaimed the republic as the government of virtue, and declared that the Catholic Church could not last for more than five centuries longer, that Catholics must ever get feebler and feebler, while Protestants grew more wealthy and more powerful. Montesquieu was followed by Voltaire, who made a national hero of the only tolerant monarch France had ever had. The *Henriade*, the sketch of which was written in the Bastille, was an eloquent protest against the whole policy which led to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

But these streaks of light were quickly obscured. Montesquieu had to pretend that the remarks in his *Lettres Persanes* adverse to monarchy and the Catholic Church were interpolations of a Dutch editor, and Voltaire took care in future works to veil his personality. Still another flash of light burst upon the mind of France when Montesquieu published his *Esprit de Lois* (1748), in which, after examining the laws of all nations, he remounted to

¹ Two of the antiphons at vespers on the evening of the day of execution.

the source of all law, showing that the laws made by men are only just when they are in accord with laws which men have not made. Montesquieu opposed eternal justice to human law, and so was among the first to deliver his countrymen from that fanatical belief that they must commit any atrocity, even hanging a good man; if such was the law of the land.

This state of the public mind explains the sympathy felt for Pierre Durand; and though this new idea of justice and humanity was not sufficiently strong and widespread to prevent such scenes, it was, like Aaron's rod, destined to swallow up every contending idea. But this implies more violence and a struggle to the death.

One result of this change in the public mind was that the Protestants were emboldened to defy the laws of 1686 and of 1724, and to hold numerous assemblies and synods. In 1728, Antoine Court undertook a visitation which covered a hundred leagues, and in which he held thirty-two meetings in two months, at times having as many as 3,000 auditors. The most timid began to come out, and the growing strength of the party of resistance is shown by the increasing sternness of the synods with reference to baptisms or marriages in Catholic churches, and non-participation in the religious exercises of the Reformed churches. Protestants who neglected the latter duty were threatened with separation from the Church of the Lord, and with being regarded as no longer His children.

The renewed interest in church life in Languedoc and the Dauphiny spread to the Rovergne, Guyenne, Quercy, Saintonge, Aunis, Poitou, and there was a universal demand for pastors. None came, however, from the refugees comfortably settled in Lon-

don, Amsterdam, and the Hague. They had to be found behind the plough, in the shop or the factory. These were the young people, who, to maintain the sacred cause of the rights of conscience, were willing to put their necks in jeopardy. And this in 1728, and for many subsequent years, was no improbable result of their ministry. Roussel and Durand both died on the gallows, and so would Barthelmy Claris, who was arrested in the August of the same year (1732) that Durand suffered. Asked how he entered the pastorate, he replied, 'I was in the Lozère; an unknown came to take me, and conducted me into Switzerland. In a village, of which I do not know the name, two pastors, whom I found in a hall, laid hands on me.' 'Where do you live?' 'At times in cities, market-towns, and farm-houses, at times in grottoes or in the forests.' 'Indicate the places.' 'I cannot. I arrive at night; I leave the same day.' 'The name of your hosts?' 'I am ignorant of them.' 'The place of your assemblies?' 'The desert.'

Thus these hunted pastors baffled their persecutors; and Claris was a peculiar instance, for he was one of the very few who managed to escape from prison. The scaffold was already erected, when his friends got a chisel passed into his cell, by aid of which he was able to raise a stone, which opened a passage into an outhouse. He descended, broke the irons off his feet, got on to the roofs, and, through the window of the first flight of the staircase, dropped to the base of the donjon. From the yard he slipped to the bottom of the rampart, and there met the two friends who, with Madeleine Fontanes, a fellow prisoner, had helped him to escape. Madeleine, interrogated next morning, said she had heard a great rat running along the walls.

To educate men for such a hazardous life was the

object for which Antoine Court lived. He knew all its perils; he had himself mounted a tree like a squirrel, to escape when the soldiers suddenly came upon him while preaching; he had had to squeeze between a bedstead and the wall when caught in a house, to fly over roofs slippery with frost, to climb high walls, and finally, to hide in a dung-heap. If audacity could help him out of a difficulty, he was equal to that; there was no danger which he did not know how to face. And he was so filled with a sense of the wonderful providence of God in the history of the Church he served so devotedly, that he proposed to collect materials for the composition of a history which might transmit to posterity an account of the miracles wrought in its favour.

The reverse of an enthusiast, Antoine Court always preferred, if he could, to attain his ends by ordinary ways. He determined to found a seminary at Geneva, where students might learn how to govern the Church, and promote religion, and which might become a centre with which all the churches could correspond.

In founding this college he was assisted by Dr. Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury, who obtained help from George I. Court went himself to be its first principal. Until then, 1729, the one thought of the churches had been, 'Save us, O Lord, we perish!' henceforth their device was, 'Under the Cross, Triumph.'

VI.

THE PASTORS OF THE DESERT.

'THERE are no more men in France!' exclaimed Louis XV., when he lost Cardinal Fleury, in 1743. No wonder, for more than half a century, Louis and

his predecessor had been getting rid of the manhood of France by every means in their power, and were still bent on crushing what remained. But there were men in France, men who, like the three Hebrew youths, stood alone in the midst of prostrate crowds.

Who is this apparent peasant, toiling, staff in hand, up the dry bed of a mountain stream, precipitous rocks on either side, and the blue heavens at the top? Who is this military-looking personage with lace on his coat and a sword at his side, who comes riding boldly into a town, as if he brought a message from the king? These men are pastors of the desert, who, with the sentence of death hanging over them, indefatigably fulfil their functions, going on long visitations through parishes larger than the dioceses of the Catholic bishops, baptizing, marrying, preaching,—each act a capital crime.

Sometimes they are comfortably lodged, but often their resting-place is a cavern, or under the shelter of a rock, or on the edge of a wood. Innumerable spies are on the watch for them; their personal appearance, down to the minutest particular, is in the hands of the police; the slightest glimpse of one of them, or report concerning their appearance, is at once forwarded to head-quarters; yet they are ever travelling about the country; holding nocturnal assemblies in summer in the woods or in the gorges of the hills, and in winter in farmhouses. At one in 1743, in a wood in the Montpellier district, there were 2,000 present; the meeting only broke up two hours before daylight, the people lighting their way with tapers. Animated by the presence of Antoine Court, who at this period was in the South of France, they dared to hold assemblies in daylight. One was held in the neighbourhood of Alais, at which no less than 20,000 persons assembled, putting up tents.

Nine pastors were present, and three young men offered themselves for the ministry. At another very numerous assembly, near Quissac, held for the election and ordination of new ministers, ten new pastors were accepted. This meeting was mainly for organization, and lasted two days. On the 18th of August, 1744, a general or national synod was held, which was attended by representatives of the old Protestant provinces of France as far as Normandy. It was a daring act, and one capable of misconstruction. England and France were at war, and the former power had not only always been sympathetic, but had sometimes been ready to help Protestant resistance in France. To disarm calumny, if possible, the Synod ordered a fast in all Protestant congregations throughout the kingdom, for the preservation of the sacred person of his Majesty, for the success of his arms,¹ for the cessation of the war and the deliverance of the Church; and the pastors were exhorted to preach at least once a year on the submission due to the powers that be. However, the Protestants could not charm their calumniators, who asserted that the Protestants were pushing their people to revolt by reading to them a false Act of Toleration; that they had sung a hymn asking God to give victory to the English; that their collections for the poor were really for military purposes; that 25,000 Camisards were ready to join the enemy; that the convents would be pillaged, the monks and priests massacred, and all the South of France given up to fire and sword.

¹ Mr. Stennett, the well-known Baptist minister and hymn-writer, preaching July 17th, 1743, the thanksgiving day for the victory at Dettingen, said: 'The London dissenters, with the assistance of their ministers, were warmly wrestling with Heaven for the salvation we now celebrate, at the very hour when the battle began' (Ivimey's *Hist. of Baptists*, p. 235).

The court believed these reports, and ordered the intendant to inquire directly of the consistories and of the pastors of the desert,—an act of recognition which shows how vacillating was their policy—if these charges were true, and if not, to inquire whether the Government could count on a levy of Protestant volunteers. And although the Protestants were able truthfully to deny every one of these allegations, the Government still persisted in believing them true, and in consequence strengthened still more their sanguinary laws. In addition to death to all pastors, and galleys for life to all sheltering them, every district in which a pastor was arrested was to pay a fine of 3,000 francs, and any one attending an assembly was not only to be sent to the galleys, but to have all he possessed confiscated.

Persecution began again to rage. In the provinces, and especially in Normandy, many children were carried off, the seizures being made at night by archers led by the parish priests. If the doors were not opened, they were broken in. Young girls were the chief prey, and their parents had to support them in some convent. These cruelties provoked a new emigration, and in Normandy alone 600 families left the country. *Lettres de cachet*—an act of absolute despotism, by which the king shut up whom he pleased—were used to imprison Protestant notables. And the legal bodies in the south, called parliaments, rivalled, as they always had done, the Government at Versailles in their persecuting spirit, pursuing all acts of baptism and solemnization of matrimony performed in the desert. Several assemblies were fired upon by the soldiers, some worshippers were killed, others wounded, and as many taken prisoners as could be caught. From 1744 to 1746, three hundred persons were condemned either to flogging, degra-

dation from the nobility, perpetual imprisonment, the galleys, or death, by the parliament of Grenoble alone. The galleys for the flock, the gallows for the pastors. No one could accuse the authorities of feebleness. In 1744 seven contumacious pastors were condemned to death; the brother of one of the seven, Louis Rang or Ranc, aged twenty-six, being executed at Die, in March, 1745. As he mounted the ladder he sang Ps. cxviii., 'O happy day.' He was followed by the youthful Chamier, a descendant of the eminent pastor of that name, who in the days of Louis XIII. fell at the siege of Montauban. A third was the aged Jacques Roger, who suffered May 22, 1745. When the executioner arrived, he cried, 'The happy day has come that I have so much desired. Rejoice, O my soul, for to-day thou art to enter into the joy of thy Lord.' After having hung twenty-four hours, his body was thrown into the Isère. A fourth was Matthieu Majal, who went by the name of Desubas. He was only twenty-six, and so beloved by the people that his arrest cost several lives. In passing through one village, a rescue was attempted, and six were shot dead. Next day the people gathered in crowds, but unarmed, and came into the town where he had been taken. The officer in command, fearing a rising, caused the troops to fire on the people from the house-tops. Thirty fell dead, and two or three hundred were wounded. The people, enraged, would now have risen in reality; the pastors threw themselves into their midst, and besought them to be quiet; but it was only when Desubas himself sent the same request that they consented to disperse. He was hanged on the esplanade of Montpellier, February 2nd, 1746.

VII.

STAMPING OUT THE PROTESTANT FAMILY.

WE have noted the growth of the sentiments of justice and humanity in the public mind, while the authorities pursued the downward path of iniquity with unequal steps, at times frantic persecutors, at times letting the law become a dead letter. When this happened, however, the bishops and clergy always appeared to spur on their flagging energies, urging more rigour. The point at which the bishops aimed was that the law should not recognise the existence of a single Protestant in France. This was the position definitely asserted by the law of 1715. But neither that, nor the yet more cruel law of 1724, could be carried out. However, the prelates conceived they might yet succeed, if the civil authority would only exercise more severity in suppressing Protestant marriage and baptism. If this could be done with uniform pitiless severity, say for twenty years, Protestantism would be extirpated. For the Protestant family was the second arch of the Protestant temple, the pastorate being the first. Destroy its foundations by compelling Protestants to appear Catholics at marriage, and Catholics again at the birth of each child, and the whole edifice would crumble to pieces.

The struggle accordingly centred in this point. To submit was to surrender the most elemental liberties—the right to know God for oneself, the right to form a family in God, the right to bring up a family for God. The pastors felt that there was no alternative; it was necessary to be hanged rather than obey the law. Seven of them tried to memorialise the king. Their faith in royalty was very different from that of their Huguenot fathers. Nor

must we attribute it to fear; it was a genuine conviction, born of the public opinion, which, apart from their attitude as confessors for religious liberty, affected them in common with the rest of Frenchmen.

But on the point in question they were immovable, the bishops all the while conceiving that to bring about their submission it was only necessary so to tighten the screws as to make the victim believe the torture would go on until every bone was dislocated, and death ensued.

Thus, between 1750-55, under a man of ominous name, the Vicomte Guignard de Saint Priest, Protestant assemblies were not only broken up, the attendants killed, wounded, and dragged to prison, but it was determined to rebaptize the children on a large scale, and to resolemnize the marriages. They began with the rich, making them pay enormous fines for neglecting obedience. The resistance was universal, and very soon the prisons were so gorged with victims that resort was had to a new dragonnade. A great number of Protestants emigrated from the South of France, and going to Rotterdam, were assisted by the Walloon churches on their way to Ireland, where, by the help of the British Government, the Irish Protestant bishops, and a number of private persons, they were comfortably established.

The flight of some only made matters worse for those that remained. Saint Priest became more severe, and the terrified people, abandoning their houses, fields, workshops and factories, fled into the woods and hid themselves in the caverns. Saint Priest recommenced the dragonnades. But these tyrants little understood human nature, which welcomes death very much sooner than is generally supposed by those in happy circumstances. On the 27th of March, 1752, François Benezet, a candidate

for the ministry, was executed at Montpellier. He had been arrested together with the pastor, Paul Rabaut, for whose head a sum of 20,000 francs was offered. By a strange resolution of the officer in command, he was released, and Benezet alone paid the penalty.

VIII.

PAUL RABAUT.

THE man whose life was so strangely preserved was to be the successor of Court in influence over the Church of the Desert. The final history of this struggle seems to centre round the figure of Paul Rabaut, a modest, simple, timid man, with nothing at all romantic in his personal character.

Born at Bedarieux, near Montpellier, in 1718, Paul Rabaut was the son of a pious draper. At the age of sixteen, that is, as early as 1734, he was wandering about in the deserts and the mountains, exposed to every inclemency of the weather, the companion of those who exercised the perilous office of the ministry in the desert. He was ten years of age when Roussel suffered; fourteen, when Durand was put to death; twenty-three, when J. P. Dortial endured the last penalty of the law; twenty-six, when Ranc, exactly his own age, and Roger were executed; twenty-seven, when Desubas, a man still younger than himself, was hanged. This was the sort of education by which this youth, timid by nature, was made one of the bravest of men, and the most effectual minister of the Reformed faith in France. Six months at the College of Lausanne, in 1740, with whatever schooling he had before he was sixteen, covered all the instruction Paul Rabaut ever received.

In 1743, he was appointed one of the ministers of the church at Nismes, and it was at the very com-

mencement of his ministry that the hanging of four of the pastors just named took place. The anxious life of a pastor of the desert did not present favourable opportunities for the printing of their sermons. A very small proportion has come down to us, but in the appendix to the letters of Paul Rabaut to Antoine Court, the following fragment of a sermon by the former appears, preached in the desert, Friday, 31st August, 1753 :

‘ Oh that I might, my dear brothers, reveal yourselves to yourselves ! Oh that I might make known to you all the misery of a soul which is far from God, that has no communion with Him, and is consequently subject to condemnation ! Oh ! if you thoroughly understood this state, if you felt all its danger, you would have no repose until the Lord had given you peace.

‘ But without doubt, the holy word that I have announced to you will not return unto the Lord without effect. Without doubt among those who listen to me are sinners who labour and are heavy-laden, souls hungering and thirsting after the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Oh ! go with confidence to this Divine Saviour ; it is you whom He calls ; it is you whose thirst He will quench, whose hunger He will satisfy ; it is for you that He shed His blood ; it is to you that He offers the treasure of His grace. Go, then, to Him, with a firm assurance that you will find in His blood the remission of your sins, and the principle of a new life. Go to Him, confounded, afflicted, as having displeased Him, and resolved never to abandon Him, never to have henceforth any other will than His. Go to Him, wholly occupied with the thought of His death, penetrated with His charity, inflamed with love to Him, and with gratitude for all He has done

for you. He is, so to speak, crucified before your eyes in the symbols of His body and His blood here presented before you; do not content yourself with contemplating them; eat the sacred bread, drink the blessed cup, and oh that you might be able to receive with the signs the thing signified! Oh that we might return to our houses justified! Oh that we might henceforth be faithful disciples, that we may drink for ever of the river of His pleasures! May He deign to give us this grace; and to this Divine Saviour, even as to the Father and to the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory evermore! Amen.'

In all that affected the rights of conscience and the existence of the Reformed religion in France, Paul Rabaut offered a persistent and immovable resistance. He firmly insisted on the duty of attending the assemblies, and not taking part in any Catholic sacrament. On the other hand, all violence was discountenanced, and no one was to come armed to the religious assemblies. If surprised, the congregation were recommended to rise simultaneously, so as to give the pastor an opportunity to escape, one of the congregation meanwhile trying to induce the commander to be reasonable; and if he proceeded to arrest any one, the whole congregation were to offer themselves as prisoners.

But this most calm and inoffensive way of maintaining the most elemental rights of manhood the authorities met by a reward for Paul Rabaut's head, which they gradually raised from 6,000 to 20,000 francs, and instead of the gallows they threatened him with the wheel.

In a document issued in 1758 by the police, and attached to the orders which were being continually sent out for the search and capture of the Protestant ministers, he is thus described:

‘ Paul Rabaut, minister, aged about forty years, height five feet, less two inches, visage plain, long and thin, a little sunburnt, black hair, wearing a peruke, nose long and pointed, somewhat aquiline, black eyes rather full, body slightly bent towards the right side, legs very thin, the right one turned inwards. It is asserted that he has lost a tooth in the upper jaw.’

Obliged constantly to change both his name and his costume, Paul Rabaut was compelled to pass rapidly from place to place, faithful young men preceding, following, and surrounding him, warning him by signals wherever there was a probability of danger. Yet, with all these precautions, he sometimes only escaped by springing on to a horse ; and at one time he was driven to hide in a sort of hut, partly hollowed out of the ground, and covered with stones and bushes. This miserable hole, in the midst of a lonely heath, served him at once for dormitory and study. But even here he was not allowed to rest in peace, for a shepherd happening to come upon it, while leading his sheep over the heath, informed the police.

The spirit in which he bore these trials may be seen by the following passage from another of his sermons, preached in the desert in 1750 :

‘ In order to love Jesus Christ as He would have us love Him, we must follow Him to Calvary ; we must go with Him to prison and to death ; you must love Him more than your goods, your liberty, or even your life. And why should we not sacrifice our goods, since He has made Himself poor that we might become rich ? Why should we not sacrifice our liberty, since He has suffered the death reserved for slaves ? Why should we not give our life for Him, since He has given His for us ? Why should

we not love Him with all the power of which we are capable, since He has loved us first, and with a love ours will never equal?'

This sermon was preached at the opening of the severe persecution referred to in the last chapter, and perhaps it is of this time that Antoine Court speaks, when he describes the sufferings under which an infinite number of unhappy innocent people groan, *as producing a despair which is above all human consideration, above religion even.*

This word of Court had a significance beyond what he intended. For this terrible despair had been produced in the name of religion, and was now sustained and intensified by the very persons who were in France the chief representatives of religion. The Bishop of Alais, far from feeling any remorse at the misery to which the policy of the authorities in Church and State had reduced the Protestants, demanded that judicial formalities should no longer be used with the Protestants, but that they should be dealt with directly by the military or civil authorities.

At this crisis the children again became the champions of the faith.

Some of ten, twelve, and fourteen years of age absolutely refused to go to church, so that they had to be dragged there; others screamed and uttered piercing cries; while others again, heedless of their lives, threw themselves like little lions on their persecutors, and tore their clothes into shreds; and some mocked the priest at the very moment he was preparing to sprinkle them.

These scenes indicate to what a hard and almost brutal condition the Protestants themselves were reduced by this horrible system of governing. And it is a truly terrible reflection that it was only stopped

when the poor worms, unable to bear the crushing heel any longer, suddenly turned and bit the oppressor.

Some peasants, encouraged by the minister Coste, seized their muskets and swore that they would stand it no longer, and that the next act of violence offered their children should be avenged by blood. No one took much heed of the threat, and on the 10th of August, 1752, some Cevenols lay in ambush, and seeing certain priests pass, who were acting as guides to the rural police, they fired on them. Three were wounded, one of whom died three months after.

These musket-shots produced an extraordinary effect; the soldiers evacuated the hill-country, the intendant stopped short, Versailles was anxious and disturbed. It was feared the Camisard war was going to break out anew. The effort to re-baptize the people was finally abandoned, as events proved, for ever.

This state of mind in the authorities explains an incident which happened in the following month. The Marquis de Paulmy,¹ Minister of War, passed through Languedoc. Paul Rabaut determined to see him, and present him with a memorial on the miserable condition of the Protestants, which he had prepared, and had got a recent synod of Lower Languedoc to adopt in the name of all the Protestants in the kingdom. On the 19th of September, 1752, Paul Rabaut waited for the minister's carriage at a certain spot on the road. It was getting dusk, but the Marquis de Paulmy stopped to receive Rabaut's

¹ Voyer d'Argenson de Paulmy (1722-1787), after serving as Minister of War and Ambassador in Switzerland, Poland, and Venice, gave himself to literary and historical studies. His library, one of the finest of the time, forms to-day the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal.

paper. The poor pastor's heart must have fluttered when he found himself recognised, but the minister was courteous in the extreme, and after mutual bows, Rabaut mounted his horse and turned back again, praising God and praying Him to bless the effort that he had made.

It was indeed a courageous act, for this very marquis had ordered the death of one of his fellow-pastors, Jacques Roger. . And the era of executions was by no means over. Two years after, Etienne Tessier, called Lafaye, minister of the Lower Cevennes, was arrested, and amidst the lamentations of his aged father and mother, and the tears of the people, he was carried off by the soldiers and hanged at Montpellier. His story, like the rest, was embalmed in popular legend.

Paul Rabaut's *rencontre* with the Minister of War interested some people at Versailles, and the Prince de Conti invited him to a conference. Paul Rabaut set out secretly for Paris, in July, 1755. He had two interviews with the prince, and made the following requests: 'That the galley-slaves, the prisoners for conscience' sake, the children of both sexes shut up in convents and seminaries, should go free; that Protestant baptisms and marriages should be declared valid on registration; that worship should be permitted, if not in temples, at least in private houses at some distance outside the towns; that Protestants should be able to sell their estates without authorization; and that the refugees should be permitted to re-enter the kingdom.'

It is evident that the authorities had begun to respect Paul Rabaut, and to think that his arrest and execution would be bad policy. Henceforth their efforts were rather directed towards forcing him to leave the country.

On New Year's Day, 1756, the church at Nismes held a service in a gorge in the desert. The people had scarcely assembled, when they were surprised by the soldiers. They flew up the rocks, among the more agile being a young man named Jules Fabre. Suddenly he remembered his father, a feeble old man of seventy. Returning, he found his fears realized; his father and another man had been captured. He ran to the soldiers, and insisted on their accepting him in place of his father. Taken away as a prisoner, he was convicted of being present at an illegal assembly, and sent to the galleys. The intendant of Languedoc, the Duke of Mirepoix, trading on the sympathy awakened by the filial devotion of the poor young convict, offered to pardon both Jules Fabre and the other prisoner, if Paul Rabaut would leave the country.

In September, 1761, the young pastor, François Rochette, was arrested near Caussade. The next day being the fair, there was a tumult. Several Protestants were arrested, among others, three brothers named Grenier.

They and the pastor were sentenced to death. Rabaut made efforts in all directions to obtain the pardon of Rochette, against whom nothing was alleged except the fact that he was a pastor. He wrote to Madame Adelaide, the eldest daughter of the king, and to other powerful personages, and, to leave no stone unturned, he sent a letter to Rousseau, just then the most popular writer in France, urging him to use his influence in favour of Rochette and the three brothers Grenier.

Rousseau's reply was not very sympathetic. Having expressed his grief and indignation that his brethren should not be allowed to hear the Word of God in peace, he added :

‘ Yet, ’ sir, ‘ that same Word of God is express on the duty of obeying the laws of princes. The power of prohibiting public assemblies is incontestably among their rights ; and after all, these assemblies not being essential to Christianity, a man may abstain from them without renouncing his faith. He who would be a Christian must learn in the first place to suffer, and every one ought to maintain a course of conduct consistent with his principles.’

Rochette and his companions were executed on the 26th of February, 1762.

While this judicial murder was being perpetrated, a still more infamous parody of justice was in progress.

IX.

THE CALAS TRAGEDY.

LOUIS CALAS, a son of Jean Calas, a Protestant tradesman of Toulouse, became a Catholic. It so affected the mind of the eldest brother, Marc Antoine, that in a fit of despondency he hanged himself. Such was the misunderstanding existing between Catholics and Protestants under the blind rule to which both had been so long subjected, that it was believed by the former that the Protestants made a duty of strangling their children, rather than that they should abjure. It was, they said, a secret doctrine, hidden from those whose birth and education would indispose them to receive it. The whole Calas family was accordingly thrown into prison, and Louis Calas was so perverted as to confirm these suspicions. The parliament of Toulouse accordingly condemned the unfortunate father, Jean Calas, a man sixty-four years of age, to be put to the question, ordinary and extraordinary, then to be broken alive on the wheel, and his body finally

burnt. And this frightful sentence was literally executed, March 10th, 1762.

The Protestants appear to have been more troubled by the dangerous idea that had got possession of their Catholic neighbours than indignant at the cruel fate of Calas. It was quite in the order of things, and besides, some of them thought he might be guilty. Paul Rabaut, as their representative, issued a protest, called *Calumny Confounded*, which was publicly burnt three days before Calas was broken on the wheel. The very morning after that doleful tragedy, the Procureur-general of Toulouse demanded that the widow, her son, and the guest who supped with Calas on the fatal evening should all be sent to the gallows.

However, a merchant from Marseilles, who had been in Nismes at the time, went to Geneva, and related the whole history to Voltaire, who was so affected by the atrocious injustice and the merciless cruelty of the sentence that he threw himself into the matter with ardour, and never rested until he had obtained a reversion of the sentence. For the three years that the effort went on, he exercised all the self-restraint of which he was capable, and was constantly anxious and irritable. But when the news arrived that the reversal of the sentence was actually decreed, the old man embraced the youngest son of Jean Calas, whom he had kept living in his house, and the two wept tears of joy. Writing to one of his friends, he declared that he had never in his life had a joy so pure as at the moment that he received the news.

The year which the unfortunate Jean Calas suffered so unjustly was a happy one for another victim of tyranny. Jules Fabre, the son who had offered his liberty for that of his father, after serving six

years on the galleys, was set free by the exertions of M. de Choiseul.

He arrived home the 21st May, 1762, and found his old father still living. The story of his filial piety became known at Paris, and Marmontel suggested the subject to a play-writer, who composed the drama of the *Honnête Criminel*, which was performed at Versailles, Paris, and throughout France, and greatly increased the effect the Calas trial had had on popular opinion.

And what befell the government that treated its unfortunate subjects in this atrocious manner? On Feb. 10th, 1763, the Peace of Paris was signed, by which France was forced to give up all hope of a footing in America, and the Bourbons their only chance of founding a new Catholic France, after losing the old. If we reflect how different would have been the fate of the Bourbons and of the Gallican Church, had France retained Canada, we shall appreciate the import of its loss at this particular time.

X.

THE EDICT OF TOLERATION, 1787.

‘ABOUT this time,’ says Bunyan, as he commences to describe the final stage in Christian’s passage through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, ‘the sun was rising.’

In like manner a new morning was certainly breaking on that land where, for seventy-seven years, Protestantism had had to pursue a path of which John Bunyan’s dream does not too forcibly paint the horrors. Vexations there still were, and even occasional cruelties; but the course of events was more and more towards the light, and every day the suffering lessened.

When the authorities began to cease to enforce certain laws, all excuse was gone for continuing to punish those who had been sentenced for breaking them. Nevertheless, a great number still suffered as slaves for life on the galleys at Toulon, or in the prisons of Aigues-Mortes. The relief of these conscripts of Protestantism was a sacred duty for those on whom the fatal lot had not fallen; and Paul Rabaut, ever active in this service, was seconded by Court de Gebelin, the learned son of Antoine Court, who, in the pursuit of his studies, and to represent the Reformed churches, now lived in Paris. In this work of removing the chains from the Protestant galley-slaves Voltaire rendered important assistance, delivering at his own cost at least one of these confessors under the cross. For the authorities sold mercy, as they had sold justice, charging 3,000 francs for an act of clemency; but as the philosophers got more powerful it was reduced to 2,000.

Near Aigues-Mortes, a dying city in one of the most dismal parts of the Mediterranean, stands the Tower of Constance. Its prisons in the middle of the last century consisted of two circular apartments, communicating through the ceiling with each other, and the upper one with the platform of the tower. The only other inlets for air and light came from narrow loopholes pierced in the thick walls. Here, in semi-darkness, during long years, bearing the stifling air of summer and the bitter winds of winter, languished a number of women, guilty of the offence of having a conscience.

One after another, death or some other circumstance delivered these poor confessors, until, in 1768, there were only fourteen remaining. In that year a truly noble personage was appointed intendant of Languedoc, Charles Just, Prince de Beauveu

(1720-1793), a descendant of one of the oldest houses in France, and a brilliant soldier. But the Prince de Beauveu had drunk the new wine; Justice, Truth, and Humanity possessed his mind and heart, and when he proceeded to visit the Tower of Constance he was shocked to find these captive women. He listened with pity to their story, and immediately ordered their release. Then he wrote to Versailles to state what he had done. M. de Florentin, who was the king's *alter ego*, and had formerly been minister of religion, was no doubt highly offended, for an order came to the intendant to re-incarcerate ten of the women at once. The prince wrote, 'The king is master to take away the employment he has deigned to confide to me, but not to prevent me fulfilling its duties according to my conscience and my honour.' Louis and his favourite minister learnt that the old Gallic stock was once more producing men, and said no more.

And such was the case with Christendom itself. Surely the human tree never was laden with a richer crop than about the middle of the seventh decade of the eighteenth century; the very time when the sun began to light up the path of this poor, woe-begone pilgrim church.

One of the first consolations of Christian, on emerging from the Valley of the Shadow of Death, was to hear the voice of a fellow-man. If this well-nigh exhausted church could have recognised the voices in the world, it would have heard such a chorus of fraternal greetings as would have made its heart leap for joy. Yes, the sun was rising on the world of which the old men bore the names of Voltaire, John Wesley, Benjamin Franklin, Dr. Johnson, Rousseau, and Whitefield; of which the men in their prime were Immanuel Kant, John

Howard, Turgot, Edmund Burke, George Washington, William Cowper; of which the young men and women were no other than Oberlin, Lavater, Jefferson, Condorcet, Pestalozzi, Pinel,¹ Hannah More, Mirabeau, Goethe, Kosciusko, and Madame Roland; and still more wonderful, which numbered among its boys, William Pitt, Robert Burns, Schiller, Danton, and Wilberforce, all born in the year 1759; Horatio Nelson, and Maximilien Robespierre being a year older. What else could be intended but a new world, when, in the last year of the same decade, to such an assemblage Time had added the twin infants, Arthur Wellesley and Napoleon Buonaparte?

The question of legal marriage and legal baptism, the question lying at the root of Protestant family life, and also fundamental to the nature of the life of the State, had to be resolved. The Protestants would not and could not give way; to do so was to extinguish themselves more surely than if they had all become Malthusians of the most self-denying order. The State, on the other hand, could not give way, unless it altered its constitution; it was a Catholic State, recognising no other religion, and Protestant marriage and baptism were, in legal parlance, crimes contrary to its fundamental laws. But the whole sentiment of the age revolted against the legal consequences of setting these laws at defiance, and Protestant marriages and baptisms multiplied indefinitely. The lawyers exercised the utmost ingenuity to drag the State out of the dilemma; and it was proposed as early as 1752 to make the priest simply the registrar of all marriages

¹ Philippe Pinel (1745-1826), the reformer of the treatment of the insane, disinterested, generous, full of goodness, and of great simplicity of life. Made chief physician of the Bicêtre in 1793, and of the Salpêtrière in 1795.

and baptisms. Three years later, Rippert de Montclar proposed that Protestant marriages should be entirely civil; the banns to be published by a court of justice, the marriage itself celebrated before a magistrate. In 1766, another eminent legist advised Louis XV. to recognise Protestant marriages by giving the pastors safe-conducts and the right to conduct worship in private. None of these propositions were carried out, but they were the thin end of the wedge, which, with each, was driven farther and farther beneath the fundamental basis of the State. The clergy saw the fact, and though some were smitten with the new spirit, the mass continued faithful to the old tradition, and at the coronation of Louis XVI., not only exacted from him the ancient oath to exterminate heresy, but conjured him not to give its supporters the slightest hope of again rebuilding their temples, and not merely to break up their assemblies, but to exclude them without distinction from all public employment, and so assure to France the unity of true Christian worship. In 1780, the general assembly of the clergy presented a memorial to the king on the enterprises of the Protestants, and demanded a return to the salutary methods and the repressive ways of the glorious days of Louis XIV.

On the other hand, some of the best men of the time worked assiduously to enlighten the well-disposed but narrow intelligence of the new monarch. The Baron de Breteuil,¹ who administered the royal household, caused Rulhière,² who had been

¹ Louis Auguste de Tournelier, Baron de Breteuil (1733-1807), diplomatist—minister under Louis XVI.—the prison system ameliorated under him—became an emigrant and a courtier of Napoleon I.

² Claude Carloman de Rulhière (1735-1791), historian and

his secretary when ambassador at St. Petersburg, to prepare an important work, entitled, *Historical Explanation of the Causes of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes*; and he also presented to Louis XVI., in his own name, a memorial on the necessity of giving the Protestants a legal position.

Lamoignon de Malesherbes, a descendant of the terrible intendant of Languedoc, Lamoignon de Bâville, composed, in 1785 and 1786, two papers on Protestant marriages, and submitted a project of law. He was a warm supporter of the rights of Protestants, and animated his own enlightened efforts on their behalf by the consideration of all the evil his ancestor had done them. At an Assembly of the Notables, in 1787, Lafayette, who, on his return from America, had sought an interview with Paul Rabaut, and had invited his son, Rabaut St. Etienne, to plead the cause of his brethren in Paris, proposed to petition the king to give the Protestants a legal position, and to order the reform of the criminal laws, a proposition unanimously adopted. This was in February, and on November 28th of the same year, the long-sought Edict of Toleration was finally signed. It was, after all, the barest concession to the necessities of the case, and gave nothing but the means of legally registering the births, deaths, and marriages of Protestants, without their having to enter a church or go before a priest. It did not remove the interdiction on Protestant worship, and care was taken to prevent them buying any building collectively, or holding one by means of certain individuals. While it permitted the legal existence of ministers, as necessary for the celebration of baptisms and marriages, it did not give them

poet, passed through a military and diplomatic career to that of literature, was admitted to the French Academy in 1787.

the rights of other non-Catholics. These rights, moreover, were of a very limited character, for the Act of 1786 did not remove their exclusion from all public employment, and especially from places which gave them the right to teach. However, it allowed them public interment. It is recorded that the first public funeral procession in Montpellier took place March 25th, 1788, M. Farrel, merchant, being buried in his garden near Boutonnet, at five o'clock in the evening.

While, however, there was no assurance that a change of the Government might not bring back persecution, the new law was the greatest possible proof that public opinion was entirely in favour of the Protestants, and that they were virtually free to worship God according to their consciences. Joyful were the canticles of praise that arose in the assemblies; and if they made use of the 98th Psalm, they could not possibly have imagined, as they sang the concluding verses, in how complete a manner they were about to be fulfilled:

‘For the Lord God cometh, He cometh to judge the earth,
With righteousness shall He judge the world,
And the people with His truth.’

There were still fanatics among the Catholics, who regarded this Edict with all the delirious indignation of the days of the League and of Jacques Clement. Espresmenil, a lawyer, stood up in the Parliament of Paris, and exhibiting a crucifix, exclaimed, ‘Will you crucify Him afresh?’ It was of little avail, and after a few protestations, the Parliament of Paris, that famous representative of unjust law, registered the Edict, and a new era commenced.

BOOK III.

FROM THE EDICT OF TOLERATION TO A NATIONAL ACCEPTANCE OF THE REFORMATION.

I.

RESULTS OF REJECTING THE REFORMATION: THE STATE.

To justify the ways of God to men, to show that there is not only a Power that maketh for righteousness, but a Divine Lover of men, who is in the world, convicting it of sin, of righteousness, and judgment to come: this is the work this history compels us to undertake.

The punishment which now befell the ruling classes in Church and State vindicates in the most precise and definite manner Divine justice. The barest details of the facts must satisfy all unprejudiced believers in the Bible, and cause them to glorify Him who cometh in His own time to judge the nations and the people with His truth; but it

does more, for it shows us that our Divine Teacher is not content with the mere vindication of justice, but would have men see that it is an evil thing and a bitter to forsake the Lord their God. We have traced the story of this declension in France from one point of view, and the way it affected those who for three centuries witnessed to their country for the necessity of Reform; but it has been quite impossible in the limits of this book adequately to show what France lost by its rejection of that witness, and to portray the gradual descent in moral corruption and material misery, not only of the people, but of the ruling classes in Church and State, who, as the real sinners, were not allowed to escape until they had paid the uttermost farthing.

Would you have some idea of the moral wretchedness to which they had reduced the country? Consider it as concentrated in the Paris of the eighteenth century. Have you ever seen Meryon's *Stryge*?¹ It represents the genius of Old Paris returned for the nonce to its ancient haunts. The artist, than whom no one perhaps ever better entered into the spirit of Old Paris, conceives the *Stryge* as a horrible vampire contemplating the city from one of the towers of Notre Dame. You see little more than its head, resting on its skinny arms; a more lustful, cruel, ape-like face it would be difficult to conceive. On a proof to be seen in the print-room at the British Museum the artist has written in pencil,—

Insatiable vampire, l'éternelle Luxure,
Sur la grande Cité convoite sa pâtre.²

C. M.

¹ *Stryge*—a vampire supposed by the ancients to come out at night and feed on the blood of men.

² Endless Luxury, an insatiable vampire,
Hungering for nourishment, looks down on the city.

Such was the Paris which had grown up under Louis XIV. and Louis XV. It was indeed a city where the lights were lurid and the shadows black as night. Huge rose the blocks of houses which sheltered the toiling workers, blocks often from four to five, or even more, storeys high ; the narrow and winding streets being lined with dark and dingy shops, broken by clefts or archways, through which the explorer emerged into well-like courtyards, down whose colossal sides the water had dribbled for years, leaving long green and unhealthy patches, and rendering the ground sodden with a perpetual pool in the centre of the yard. These narrow streets were mostly crowded and dirty, and all were without any accommodation for the foot passenger.

And not only these winding lanes and tall, tumble-down streets, with their towers and their gables, their sides often out of the perpendicular, and their numberless storeys built upon cyclopean arcades, but the very river, as it began to fork at the Pont Neuf, wore a certain air of oppression, the distance being shut out by the houses on the bridges. Those on the Pont St. Michel presented a hideous aspect. Their river walls were either black or of a most unhealthy green, with endless rags drying from the windows, the whole shored up by worm-eaten beams, which meeting the river became the landing-place of all kinds of filth.

‘Ten thousand people,’ writes Arthur Young in the summer of 1789, ‘have been all this day in the Palais Royale.’ In truth, all the vice of Europe drifted there as to its natural cesspool, and no sooner had night fallen than along every street in Paris there were human streamlets rushing heedless to the vortex of perdition.

In 1784 there were no less than 70,000 fallen women in Paris, with a revenue estimated at 143,800,000 livres, and some of those who lived in the Palais Royale spent 50,000 livres a year. Those among them who had rooms of their own kept a gaming-table, while in the Palais Royale alone there were thirty-one gaming-houses distinctly so called. A speaker at the Commune of Paris reckoned that there were 4,000 established in the city. From gilded saloons intended for those used to loll on couches or flutter about boudoirs, to wretched dens where ragged players hazarded two liards, and were refreshed with haricots and cheese, every class and every section of a class had its own gambling-house. Gambling was, in fact, an organized business.

Never was fashion more capricious or more fecund in new inventions than in 1789. Never was luxury more insolent. We read of an *Aspasia* of the day, the harness of whose carriage was studded with paste in imitation of diamonds; of another who appeared in Longchamps in a coach as splendid as that of the Lord Mayor, drawn by eight English grays, each of which cost a hundred and twenty guineas, and standing up behind were three tall footmen and a *chasseur* in rich liveries, with swords, canes, and bags; of a third, who lived on the *Chaussée d'Antin* in a palace in miniature, the object of universal admiration, and visited by strangers as one of the curiosities of Paris.

Contrast with these facts some others. 'Remember,' says Taine, speaking of Paris on the eve of the Revolution, 'that in 1786 two hundred thousand persons are enumerated whose property, all told, has not the intrinsic worth of fifty crowns.' Read the report of the state of the Paris hospital for the sick poor—the famous *Hôtel Dieu*, which stood imme-

diately under the eyes of the archbishop—by Tenon, Professor of Pathology in the College of Surgeons, a report presented to the Academy of Sciences, and published in 1788 by command of the king.

‘The stench on entering was overwhelming. Each bed contained on an average three patients, the larger ones being intended for six. Some were placed on the roofs of the bedstead, and those who attended had to go up a ladder to reach them. In the women’s ward all sorts of patients were put together—the wounded, the fever-stricken, lying-in women, those suffering from small-pox, those infected with the itch. It was the same in the male wards, with the exception of small-pox patients, who had a ward to themselves; but they were heaped together, four to six in a bed, in every stage of the disorder. The walls of the hospital were covered with dirt, vermin, and all vileness, one side of the walls being so dark that the vermin increased unchecked.’

One would have thought the Hôtel Dieu the acme of human misery; but there was a lower stage in the Parisian Inferno, the Bicêtre.

This unhappy institution had become in Louis XVI.’s time a mere human sewer, into which were flung all the refuse of society. The incorrigible vagabond, the convict on his way to the galleys or under sentence of death, persons suffering from maladies the result of debauch, imprudent authors shut up by *lettre de cachet*, old paralytics, young epileptics, mad people, children, incurables of every kind, were thrown pell-mell into the Bicêtre. The sexes were confounded, as were all ages and all infirmities. Those who could not pay 150 francs a year for a single bed had to share one with seven other persons. They divided themselves into two

squads of four each ; the first squad went to bed from eight until one, the second from one until six in the morning. Each night the dormitories were a battle-scene. The wretched prisoners were half starved and suffered from scurvy ; the discipline was so brutal that revolts were numerous. As to the galley-slaves and those lying under sentence of death, they were immured below in a series of narrow dens, with no light but what came through a sighing hole in the vault. One man lived in this manner for forty-three years bound by four chains to the walls. Lunatics were treated to the same rigours, being chained and shut up in cells of six feet square, into which air and light only entered through a little window in the door. They lay on a plank covered with straw, which was renewed once a month. Chained by the middle of the body, their feet and hands manacled, naked for the most part, and shivering with cold, receiving neither care nor medicine, they were in a state of continual fury, reviling the curious who came in pleasure parties to see them, rushing on their keepers when the doors opened, and trying to break their heads against the wall, and often succeeding.

If this was the state of the first city in France, what was the state of the country ? Taine, in his *Ancien Régime*, tells us that ‘ a vast portion of the soil had ceased to nourish men, and the rest, badly cultivated, scarcely supplied their most pressing wants. As soon as there was a bad harvest the people saw themselves in the presence of starvation. There were villages where entire families remained in bed the greater part of the day to lessen their sufferings. The people in France literally died of hunger.’

Death was at the gates of Paris itself. ‘ The last

ten miles of my approach to Paris,' says Arthur Young, 'I looked in vain for that throng of carriages which near London impedes the traveller. The road to the gates of Paris, in comparison, was a *perfect desert*.' On leaving Paris later in the year by another route, one of the greatest thoroughfares, his former impression was renewed. 'In ten miles we met not one stage or diligence; only two messageries and a few chaises—not a tenth of what would have been met had we been leaving London at the same.' And again he uses the expression, 'It was a perfect desert.' Farms abandoned, nobles ruined, merchants bankrupt, houses falling to decay—such was the condition to which its rulers in Church and State had brought France.

II.

RESULTS OF REJECTING THE REFORMATION: THE CHURCH.

THE power on whom the punishment first fell was that which had absorbed into itself all authority, and therefore the final responsibility. But more to blame than the throne and the court was the Church, which through a long succession of ages had infused tyrannical ideas into the soul of France, and struggled to prevent any repentance on the part of rulers or people.

And if its rulers had not been the blindest of men, they would themselves have seen in the corruption and misery to which the very institution they governed was reduced a clear indication of the folly and wickedness of which they and their predecessors had been guilty in rejecting the Reformation, and

through so many ages crushing its witnesses and refusing to obey the message they brought.

The property of the Gallican Church in 1788, in woods, houses, lands, tithes, and money in the stocks yielded a yearly income of 224,000,000 livres. In the provinces of Roussillon, Alsace and Franche-Comté, the clergy owned one half of the land, and in Hainault-Français and Artois, three parts. To the income just mentioned must be added the value of the feudal rights enjoyed by most of the upper clergy, the ordinary fees in the churches and those charged for copies of registration of births, deaths, and marriages, the expenses allowed archbishops and bishops, the profit they gained from the sale of dispensations and licenses, the collections of the begging friars,—raising the annual income of the Church to an amount estimated at 272,000,000 livres, the value of this income capitalized being eight milliards of livres: a sum which, to represent the actual value of property, ought, it is said, to be tripled. It must also be remembered that these sums, if turned into the value of money to-day, ought again to be doubled.

One of the means by which the dominant Church in France had obtained this enormous property was the persecution of heretics. The crusade against the Albigenses had been immensely profitable in this way, the spoils enabling the bishops of Languedoc to become more numerous than elsewhere, and among the most wealthy prelates in France. The same sort of plunder had gone on through the generations, and was particularly the case at the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, when the property of the crushed Reformed churches was constantly given over to the conquering Church. Another profitable source of revenue was the sale of indulgences, which

after the era of Luther took the less scandalous form of a trade in rosaries, scapularies, ribbons, and waistbands. Business of various kinds was carried on in the convents, its scale and universality being revealed by the failure of a certain Jesuit, Father Lavallette, to meet some bills he had signed, and the consequent expulsion from France in 1762 of the society to which he belonged.

Of this enormous income, the vast proportion was absorbed by the aristocracy of the clergy, regular and secular. In 1788, according to Taine, the revenue of the bishops amounted to 5,600,000 livres, giving an average of 50,000 to each. Ferrières says that each prelate had 100,000 livres income, some 200,000 or 300,000, and even as high as 800,000. The official figures put Auch, Metz, and Albi, each at 120,000, and Paris and Cambrai, each at 200,000. The discrepancy is explained by the immense supplemental revenues drawn by many bishops. Albi, 100,000 livres; Narbonne, 120,000; Rouen, 130,000. Besides a supplemental revenue of 106,000, Cardinal de Brienne, Archbishop of Toulouse, had 678,000 in benefices, besides pensions, etc. In cutting down one wood belonging to one of his abbeys he netted a million livres. And he was exceeded in opulence by Cardinal de Rohan, Archbishop of Strasburg, whose château could lodge 200 guests, not counting their servants; whose stables contained 180 horses, and his court the most amiable ladies in the province, besides numbers of others who were continually coming from Paris and Versailles. This prelate took baths of milk to preserve his complexion, and has made himself historic by his connexion with the scandal of 'the Diamond Necklace.'

Dancing, hunting, going to see licentious plays, such were the occupations in which these wealthy

bishops engaged. At Saint Dié, a bishop celebrated his installation by inviting all the town to a dance, which was kept up until two in the morning.

Among these exalted dignitaries, all agree there was little pretence of believing in the religion they represented. The fashionable preachers no longer described Jesus Christ as the Son of God, but referred to Him as 'the legislator of the Christians.' The Abbé Maury, who was a violent defender of the rights of the clergy, was as notorious a sceptic as Bishop Talleyrand. When at the death of the Archbishop of Paris some one proposed the Archbishop of Toulouse for the place, Louis XVI. said, 'We must have an archbishop in Paris who at least believes in God.' A curé of Paris is reported to have said that there were perhaps four or five out of the hundred or more bishops of France who cared for religion more than they did for themselves.

Perhaps this curé was bitter, seeing his order was treated so unfairly. The parish clergy of France, numbering some fifty or sixty thousand persons, only got 36,000,000 livres between them, an average of 600 or 700 livres each. To this they might add what they could get by collections, which, however, owing to the decrease of 'devotion,' had much fallen off. When they had paid their house-keeper's salary, and the cost of wood and firing, hardly enough was left to keep soul and body together. They had to divide their tithes with all sorts of people, who had acquired rights in connexion with them. One priest complained that he had no presbytery, while an abbot he never saw drew 57,000 livres annually out of his parish. And to get these tithes, which were cruel impositions on a ruined peasantry, the curé had to be perpetually struggling with his parishioners, until it ended by

his being hated. And to get into such an undesirable position it was of little use to prove ability, all depended on the assiduity with which a priest was able to run about the country and solicit the patrons. The bishops could do very much as they liked with the curés, even to shutting them up by *lettres de cachet*; and they were not ordinarily considered good enough company for the bishop's table, to which only clerics of noble birth were admitted. For such clerics all the good posts were reserved; thus there were two castes in the Church—there were clerical Brahmins and clerical Sudras.

III.

REFORMATION AT LAST.

THERE is a word peculiar to the New Testament, but pregnant with historical truth—the fulness of time. Every effort to bring about the most obviously just reform fails until that hour arrives, and then it takes place with the celerity and certainty of the capture of Jericho. So it was now. The evils which Jurieu had in 1694 shown that every order and every class were suffering had at last reached a point at which they began to flow together and to make common cause. The first victory of the new ideas, and the one that brought all the rest, was the fusion of the orders; by which the third estate, or representatives of the mass of the people in the States-general, not only became the equal of the noblesse and the clergy, but the preponderating power; and this was brought about by a majority of the lower clergy leaving their own body and going to join the third estate. The united bodies, under the name of the National Assembly, held their first sitting in the nave of the Church of St. Louis at Versailles; the

clergy, who were in the choir when they entered, coming out to sit among the other deputies, some of whom were Protestants, notably Rabaut St. Etienne, pastor at Nismes, and son of that famous pastor of the desert Paul Rabaut. The adhesion of the lower clergy may seem explained by the account of their miserable state just given; but how was it the greater part of the higher clergy and of the nobility now gave way, and that all classes were soon animated by the prevailing spirit of disinterestedness which culminated in the sitting of August 4th, 1789, when the various deputies of the Assembly emulated each other in sacrificing such of their privileges as were plainly unjust to the community? On that memorable evening, serfdom, seigniorial rights, tithes, inequality of taxation, privileges, in fact, of every kind, were abolished, and the gates of the State flung wide open to Protestants by the admission of all citizens to civil and military employments. This admirable hour, which future generations will ever regard as one of the brightest in the history of the world, is not to be explained as a mere outburst of enthusiasm, because some next day were inclined to minimise their concessions. Disinterestedness had taken possession of men's hearts, and was especially manifest among those of whom it would demand the greatest sacrifices. Even foreigners who happened to be in Paris at the time—for example, the Duke of Bedford—were carried away by the prevailing spirit. Ladies brought their jewellery and a great number of articles in gold and silver, and offered them to the National Assembly. Little children sent their savings or their trinkets, while great nobles offered as much as 100,000 livres to the public treasury.

Surely this was reformation, and reformation

beginning in the right way, by the individual citizen surrendering all that it was individually selfish in him to retain.

When in 1789 the electors of Paris were chosen, the memorial of complaints and grievances which they sent up declared that religion could only be established by persuasion, and never by constraint; that *the Christian religion ordaining civil tolerance, every citizen ought to enjoy liberty of conscience*; that all payment of moneys to Rome should be interdicted; that non-residence on the part of a bishop, pluralism on the part of any clergyman, perpetual vows and the surrender of property on the part of persons entering the monastic state, should be disallowed. Such in 1789 was the change wrought in the city of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew and of the League.

On October 6th Louis XVI. signed the Declaration of the Rights of Man, the sixth article of which confirmed some of the resolutions of August 4th, most important to the Protestants:

‘The law is the expression of the general will. All citizens have the right to concur personally, or by their representatives, in making it. It ought to be the same for all, whether it protects or punishes. All citizens being equal before it, are equally admissible to all dignities, places, and public offices according to their capacity, and without any distinction but that of their virtues and their talents.’

Another article, the tenth, was directly intended for the Protestants, and would have been far more luminous if the amendment supported by great speeches from Mirabeau and Rabaut St. Etienne had been carried. ‘I claim,’ said the latter, ‘for two millions of useful citizens their rights as Frenchmen. It is not toleration I ask, it is liberty.’

Toleration! Support! Pardon! Clemency!—ideas supremely unjust towards the dissidents, so long as it is true that difference of religion, difference of opinion, is no crime. I ask for all non-Catholics what you ask for yourselves: equal rights, the liberty of their religion, the liberty of their worship, the liberty to celebrate it in houses consecrated to this object, the certainty of being no more disturbed in their religion than you are in yours, and the perfect assurance of being protected as you, as much as you, and in the same manner as you, by our common law. These people present themselves before you to-day bearing the marks of the blood of their ancestors and of their own chains.'

Notwithstanding this eloquent appeal, the Assembly rejected the amendment in favour of the article as it now stands:

'No one ought to be molested for his opinions, even his religious ones, provided their manifestation does not trouble the public order established by law.'

The National Assembly now took into consideration the scandal of the flagrant inequalities in the State Church, and decreed that all its property should be considered at the disposal of the State (November 2nd, 1789). It then ordained that no parish priest should receive less than twelve hundred francs with a house and a garden. It declared itself opposed to religious vows; all could leave their convents or not, as they chose; in any case, they were individually to receive pensions, as there would be no more corporate ecclesiastical property distinct from the State; the pensions were to be in accordance with the former condition of the pensioners. Many stormy discussions took place, in one of which a deputy having invoked the oath Louis XIV. took

at Cambrai in 1675 to maintain the Catholic religion to the exclusion of every other, Mirabeau could not restrain himself. 'Of course,' said he, 'under a reign signalised by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes there were all sorts of intolerances; but if you want references to history, I beg you not to forget that from this very tribune where I stand,' pointing at the same time to the spot, 'the window¹ is visible from whence a French monarch, armed against his subjects by factious wretches who mixed up temporal interests with the sacred interests of religion, fired the arquebuse which was the signal of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew.'

While the National Assembly declared the property of the clergy at the disposal of the State, it ordered (July 10th, 1790) the restitution of the property which had been taken from Protestants expatriated at the time of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. It further restored to descendants of the Protestant refugees all their rights as French citizens, on the sole condition of their returning to France and taking the civic oath. And by the Constitution accepted by the king September 13th, 1791, the right for which the Protestants had struggled for more than two centuries was guaranteed. The terms were unmistakable: '*The Constitution guarantees . . . liberty to every man . . . to exercise the religious worship to which he is attached.*'

At the same time that the National Assembly made all these acts of reparation to the members of

¹ Concerning the window from which Charles IX. fired on the people there is a difference of opinion. At the time Mirabeau spoke it was supposed to have been the window at the end of the little gallery at the Louvre, and it was there accordingly that the Convention decreed that an inscription should be put up devoting the act to public execration.

the Reformed communions in France, it set about the work of reforming the old and dominant Church.

The authority which the National Assembly claimed for the State differed very little from that which Louis XIV. had exercised, only for king it substituted nation, for the will of one the will of all.

‘The Church is in the State, the State is not in the Church. The State does not pretend to interfere with the interior life of the Church, but in all that touches its relations with the State, the latter is the supreme sovereign authority.’ Such were the Ludovician principles, and the National Assembly acted upon them. It commenced by making the dioceses conterminous with the new departments. It denied all authority outside France, except such as was exercised in a purely spiritual manner; all offices therefore dependent on the pope were suppressed, and all titles and offices not comprehended in the new constitution, such as prebends, canons, abbots, priors, etc., shared the same fate. It gave to each bishop a council, without which he could not act, comprised of his vicars and the directors of the seminary or theological school of the diocese. The bishops were to be chosen by those who elected the assembly of the department, the curés by those who elected the administrative assembly of the district. Vote by ballot, an absolute plurality of the suffrages, and no religious test from the electors, so that the poll was open to Protestants, rendered the election as truly popular and representative as was possible. The metropolitan had the right to examine and refuse a newly elected bishop, as the bishop to examine and refuse a newly elected curé; but neither archbishop nor bishop could act without consulting their councils, and the reasons of rejection were to be given in writing, the person elected having power

to appeal. Every bishop was to receive 12,000 to 20,000 francs a year, according to the importance of his diocese, the Bishop of Paris 50,000 francs; and all were to reside in their dioceses, and were to be watched over and submitted to the authority of the municipality. All clergymen on being elected to any position were to take an oath to be faithful to the Nation, the Law, and the King, and to maintain with all their power the constitution. This project, called the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, was 'the work,' says Thiers, 'of the most pious of the deputies.' It was due to Cannes (1740-1804), a devout Jansenist, formerly chosen on account of his knowledge of ecclesiastical law to be Advocate-general of the clergy, but now deputy for Paris, that this law was decreed by the National Assembly July 12th, 1790, and sanctioned August 29th, 1790.

IV.

LIGHT AND JOY ONCE AGAIN FLOOD FRANCE.

As the first days of Reform in France were ushered in by a short season of universal joy, so it was in the first days of its final triumph.

'All worked naturally,' says Lanze de Peret, the historian of Languedoc, 'for all willed the same thing, and nothing was heard but the sound of festal gatherings, held on every occasion that news came from Paris of some favourable event. In several communes Protestants were to be seen attending the Catholic churches to chant the *Te Deum*, and the Catholics (this was a fact constantly happening) joined in like manner in the thanksgiving services held by Reformed.' And this occurred not only in Gard, but in many places. The old theological antagonisms seemed for a time to be forgotten, and

men's hearts were fused together by the power of a new hope. Protestant pastors were elected members of the municipal councils and deputies to the National Assembly.

But the unity realized was far more than a reconciliation between Protestants and Catholics; it was a unity, felt for the first time in the history of France, between all sorts and conditions of men. Patricians and plebeians, the learned and the ignorant, the cleric and the layman, forgot every distinction in realizing the fact that they were men and brothers, and as such all together free from the cruel burdens of the dark and cruel past. And not only men individually, but men collectively for the first time in history felt this extraordinary impulse of unity. Village held out its hand to village, city to city, province to province. In a few weeks local distinctions which had lasted for a thousand years, with all the privileges and prejudices which had grown up with them, were surrendered for the sake of realizing the immense joy of national unity. In the whole history of the world the promise had never been more literally realized, 'A nation shall be born in a day.'

We read in the Book of Exodus that when Israel realized that they had indeed escaped from the bondage of Egypt, they sang a song of triumph, Miriam and all the women answering thereto with timbrels and dances. This happened in France. Regiments of national guards, many thousands strong, belonging to conterminous provinces, met and swore to remain for ever united. The movement passed rapidly through France, and terminated in a vast act of National Federation in Paris. 'This social contract,' says Taine, 'is a touching and sublime idyll, extending from one end of France to the other;

all hand in hand go to swear to the new compact with hymns, dances, tears, and cries of joy.'

Nor is it true to say that in 1789 France attempted to be happy without the Source of all happiness, or that she offered thanks to any impersonation of herself, or to the wisdom and goodness of men. It was a spontaneous outburst, which found its fitting expression in churches and temples. The joy-bells were rung, festal salutes were fired, and *Te Deums* and thanksgivings ascended from all parts of France. 'The happy reunion which has taken place in the nation being the most signal benefit Divine Providence has accorded us, we ought to render Him our solemn thanks. For this cause we order that this evening all the bells shall ring throughout the city, and to-morrow there shall be a *Te Deum*.' Thus commenced the charge of the Bishop of Grenoble in 1789. In Paris each act of emancipation was celebrated in the churches. After the fall of the Bastille the Abbé Fauchet preached from the words in Galatians v. 13, 'Vos enim ad libertatem vocati estis fratrem,' and, the sermon over, he was conducted in triumphal procession to the Hôtel de Ville. Joyous processions were the order of the day, so numerous that on one occasion a troop of young girls clad in white extended from the Hôtel de Ville to Notre Dame as one living chain. Preaching in Notre Dame on the occasion of the consecration of some flags, the Abbé Fauchet exclaimed, 'Let us swear to be happy'; and immediately the congregation, composed of soldiers, rose and agitated their swords, as the old Gallic warriors had done in moments of joyous enthusiasm.

But the light and joy of this new dawn vanished like the earlier one, to give place to a lurid day, in which nothing more was seen of the sun, and peace seemed for ever to have fled the earth.

By whose fault? by none other surely than that same spirit of selfishness and tyranny which had produced the former horrible misery. The 'blatant beast' would not die, but notwithstanding his wounds, was yet strong enough to bring all things to ruin. On the famous night of the 4th of August the prelates were ready enough to surrender the privileges of the aristocracy, but not those that were peculiar to the Church. For them they were soon found fighting tooth and nail, and rather than yield they were ready to engulf the country in civil war. As early as October, 1789, the Bishop of Treguier published such an attack on the new order of things that the Assembly had him indicted for *lèse-majesté*. And very soon, not only this bishop of the most Catholic city in France, but all the bishops of France, one hundred and twenty-eight against four, were arrayed against the Revolution, and more or less sympathetic with those who were preparing to invade France and restore the old *régime*. In seeing the representatives of religion thus arrayed against what they felt the most joyful event in their history, the mind and soul of the people were thrown into a turmoil of confusion; hence the frightful outburst of bloodshed and infidelity.

V.

ROME AND REFORM INCOMPATIBLE.

THE representatives of the old order of things did not accept without a struggle a Reformation which for centuries they had moved heaven and earth to prevent. In the debates on the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, they made every effort to mitigate the effect of the changes proposed, and when they became law, no course was left but to submit or



RABAUT ST. ETIENNE.

conspire. For the latter course they had abundant precedent.

Royalist conspirators in connexion with the emigrant princes worked in the south of France, and especially at Nismes and Montauban, to make use of the great powers the Assembly had delegated to municipal authority, to render those cities the centres of a rebellion. Everything was done to re-awaken the old Catholic rancour against the heretics. The election of the Protestant pastor of Nismes, Rabaut St. Etienne, May 16th, 1790, as President of the National Assembly, was spoken of as capping all its crimes. And the refusal of the same 'infamous Assembly' to declare the Roman Catholic Church the dominant religion in France was the signal for commencing an agitation all over the country. Volunteer regiments composed of Catholic peasants were raised to oppose the national guards. The first outbreak occurred at Montauban, on the occasion of a visitation to a convent about to be suppressed.

National guards were killed, five of whom were Protestants. On the 13th of June, 1790, the same kind of disturbance began in Nismes, and went on for four days. Armed men wearing white cockades ran about crying, 'Kill ! kill !' Some atrocious acts were committed; but what most of all incensed the friends of the new order of things was that Froment, the agent of the emigrant princes, who was in the château, caused his men to fire during a truce, in which attempts were being made to bring about peace. Reprisals followed, in which more than 300 Catholics were killed, many Protestants in the country round Nismes also losing their lives in the struggle.

A year after these events in Nismes, the Protestants

of that city hired a church which had formerly belonged to the Dominicans, and placing over its portal the words required by the new law, 'Edifice consecrated to the religious worship of a particular society,' it was opened for public worship on Sunday, May 20th, 1792, in the presence of the municipal council and some other authorities. Three pastors took part in the service, one of whom was Paul Rabaut, who offered the dedicatory prayer, which he terminated by using the very words that the Chancellor Letellier uttered after he had placed the seal of the kingdom on the Act revoking the Edict of Nantes: 'Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart, O Lord, according to Thy word, in peace; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.'

In March, 1790, the pope took open part against the new order of things. He condemned liberty of conscience, was indignant that non-Catholics should be declared capable of municipal, civil, and military office; political liberty he treated as a chimæra; the limitation of the royal power was not permissible, since it would interfere with the king's duty to defend the Church. Of course Pius VI. refused to sanction the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, although by so doing he placed Louis XVI. in a position at once intolerable and dangerous. But Rome and the *émigrés*, having no conception of the depth and force of the change that had taken place in the conscience of France, recklessly urged to resistance the representatives of the old order of things still remaining in that country. Three bishops and a considerable number of curés signed a protest against the Civil Constitution of the Clergy; one bishop after another denounced it in their charges; open resistance broke out in several parts of France.

The National Assembly met this opposition by a

vote (Nov. 27th, 1790), ordering that within a week bishops, curés, and vicars should take an oath to support the Constitution, or be regarded as having resigned their offices.

In December the king was asked to sanction the decree: the position was cruel, for to do so was to break with the pope, not to do so with the Assembly. Louis sanctioned the decree (Aug. 29th, 1790), having already written to the King of Prussia to come and help him against the French people.

The oath required of the French clergy was only a general promise to be faithful to the Nation, the Law, and the King, and to maintain the Constitution; monks, canons, abbés, although they received pensions, were not required to take it.

The 4th of January, 1791, was the day appointed. The refusals were almost universal, and in the end 128 bishops lost their sees. Four alone took the oath, one of whom was the Cardinal Lomenie de Brienne, who has been already referred to as the second richest bishop in France. However, on this occasion, having to make his choice between France and the pope, he preferred the former, and resigned his office as cardinal. When the pope in secret consistory stated his acceptance of this resignation, he recalled Lomenie de Brienne's blameworthy acts, and chief among them was this, that he had helped to resuscitate the deplorable Edict of Nantes.

Two days after the death of Mirabeau, on the 4th of April, 1791, appeared the papal brief, denouncing the Revolution. On the 6th, there was an auto-da-fé in the gardens of the Palais Royale. An effigy of the pope, in his pontifical robes, was solemnly conducted to a stake prepared there by the people. Gorsas, afterwards a Girondist deputy, read a paper stating the crimes of the pontiff, and concluded

by requesting that in reparation of the same he be given over to the flames. The proposal of the accuser being unanimously adopted, the effigy of Pius VI. was consumed, with his brief, amidst boisterous applause.

New bishops and new curés were elected to the sees and parishes thus vacated, but the nonconforming clergy were treated with some consideration, for in Paris the municipality granted them eight churches for their own use. But this tolerance was not approved by the people, who tried to prevent the opening of one of these churches, the *Eglise des Theatins*, and on other occasions disturbed their worship and attacked the congregations. A mass, celebrated by a nonconforming priest at Montpellier, having been disturbed by the populace, the Catholics raised the cry, 'Open the churches! Liberty of worship!' And this was the very city where Catholic authority in the name of religious unity had hanged Claude Brousson, Alexandre Roussel, Pierre Durand, and Matthieu Desubas, martyrs for liberty of worship!

The ever-increasing danger of a foreign invasion, supported by numerous conspiracies all over the country, the centres and inspiration of which were the priests who refused to take the oath, rendered the maintenance of religious liberty in a country but recently converted to the idea very difficult, if not almost impossible.

Their long experience, their attitude as martyrs, and their apparent unchangeableness, gave the nonconforming priests greater influence than ever with those whose Catholicism was more deeply rooted than their desire for reform. When therefore it became clear that the priests who refused to take the oath to the new Constitution were conspiring

with the emigrants, who were doing their best to induce Austria and Prussia to invade France, the Assembly ceased to be tolerant, and began to treat them as the determined enemies of the new order of things.

The views of the party now making use of these unfortunate priests may be gathered from a memorial sent about this time to the pope by the Abbé Maury,¹ who was, from the first, the political leader of the royalist and clerical party in the Assembly. In this paper he openly claimed the restoration of all the privileges of the old Church, the restitution of its enormous wealth, the abolition of all the precautions taken even in monarchical times against its power to acquire the riches of the dying, the reconsecration, in fact, of the worst abuses, including a return to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. He affirmed that Louis XIV., having thoroughly studied the spirit of his nation, had learnt that the French character could not accommodate itself to

¹ The Abbé Maury (1746-1817), son of a poor shoemaker. He was descended from a Protestant family, who quitted the Dauphiny at the time of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Entering the clerical profession, he went to Paris, and before long became preacher to the king, and a member of the French Academy. Elected in 1789 to the States-general, he became in the National Assembly the leader of the royalist party, and the vigorous opponent of Mirabeau and the revolutionary leaders. When he saw that the cause he led was hopeless, he fled to Rome, where he was made a cardinal and Bishop of Montefiascone. At the latter place he was surrounded by a little court, which contained the Duke of Berry and the Cardinal of York, the descendants of Louis XIV. and of James II. Judging by the astonishing success of Buonaparte that the Bourbons were ruined, he went over to the emperor, who made him a French cardinal and Archbishop of Paris. He repaid Napoleon by assisting him to divorce Josephine; but his conduct was greatly resented by the pope and the royalists, and he died in disgrace at Rome.

the public exercise of two parallel religions; it must have one religion alone, or none at all. And he goes on to assert that the participation of the Protestants in the Revolution justified the Revocation, and that it was necessary to crush under foot a vain philanthropy; in fact, he proposed nothing less than the withdrawal of all rights of citizenship from the Protestants, and the putting them once again outside the law. This done, he would have the pope issue a bull of excommunication against the Janse-nists and the philosophers, the men, in fact, who had made the Revolution; and thus the people would be led back to reason, and break the yoke to which for a moment they had submitted. It was the spirit of the Catholic League reborn; and as that spirit found in old times a welcome in Rome, so it did now.

In October, 1791, a Legislative Assembly took the place of the Constituent, the whole of the deputies without exception being new men. This complete change in the actual ruling power in the country did not, however, make the slightest difference in the national policy with reference to the nonconforming priests, who were treated with more and more severity.

A deputy, named Jean François Duval, a labouring man, proposed that every nonconforming priest who would not promise submission to the laws should be compelled to go about labelled, 'Priest suspected of sedition.' Couthon favoured dealing with them without forms of law, on the plea that in the places where they had influence it was impossible to get witnesses against them. La Jeune proposed that within a fortnight every nonconforming priest should be obliged to fix his abode in the chief town of his department. The Abbé Fauchet,

become constitutional Bishop of Caen, advocated the withdrawal of all pensions from the nonconforming priests, urging that the country ought not to pay people to tear it to pieces. The Assembly did not adopt these propositions; but when news arrived that the department of Maine and Loire was on the brink of civil war, the Assembly, on the 29th of November, 1791, decreed that within a week all priests not in office should take the civic oath, or be deprived of their pensions, and as men suspected of sedition should be placed under surveillance. Priests who provoked disobedience were to be punished with two years' imprisonment, and to be held responsible for all acts of murder or pillage which might ensue. No churches were henceforth to be allowed except those supported by the State, and lists of the priests who took or refused the oath were to be forwarded to the Assembly.

The king refused to sanction this decree. The excitement in Paris became great, and the ministry resigned. Anarchy prevailed throughout the country, and in the greater number of the departments the decree was carried out, notwithstanding its want of the royal sanction.

On the 25th of May the Assembly decreed that refractory priests should be deported outside the kingdom within a month, on the demand of twenty citizens, approved by the district authorities, the sentence being finally pronounced by those of the department; the priest deported was to be allowed three livres a day for the expenses of his journey.

On the 20th of June the people invaded the Tuileries. A series of events now occurred, raising the popular excitement to a point at which it became overwhelming, and in July, the proclamation of the Duke of Brunswick, who was marching into France

with the combined forces of Austria and Prussia, fell upon Paris like a spark on a barrel of gunpowder. The answer was the storming of the Tuileries, the king being forced to throw himself on the protection of the Assembly. The royal authority was suspended, and the king and his family were shut up in the Temple, Danton becoming Minister of Justice. The news of treason in the army, and a belief that the officers were in league with the enemy, begot a panic, and this panic begot the Reign of Terror, which more and more became the only state of things the public mind would permit.

Now arose the terrible Commune, now appeared on the scene the still more terrible Marat. The Commune struggled with the Assembly, the Assembly was cowed and hesitated, and Danton uttered his famous but equivocal word, 'To conquer, gentlemen, we must be audacious, more audacious, always audacious; and France will be saved.'

Fear and suspicion are the parents of cruelty. It was fear of the terrific intentions avowed by the foreign invaders, now about to cross the frontier, and suspicion that France itself was full of traitors, ready to co-operate with them, that led people in Paris and elsewhere into attempting to arrest the danger by acts of terror. If we ask from whence came this belief in the efficacy of terror, this spirit which can bear to use so inhuman a weapon, who can doubt it was owing to the teaching of that institution which for centuries had educated the people by maxims and examples of cruel intolerance? The Church of Rome, and the old State of France, as eldest daughter of that Church, had no right to say a word against the Reign of Terror; for it was they who had infused this spirit into the people, and they who had taught them that acts perfidious and mur-

derous and fiendishly cruel were perfectly justifiable, and even meritorious, if necessary to preserve a nation from moral ruin.

VI.

REAPING THE WHIRLWIND.

Two hundred and twenty years had passed away, when almost day for day the sword of vengeance was withdrawn from the scabbard, and fell on the victims destined vicariously to suffer for those classes and institutions which inspired, conspired, participated in, or approved of, the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew. The last days of August, 1792, were, as those days in August, 1572, days of suspicion, panic, horrible imaginings, and shuddering presentiments. Then, as on the former occasion, the populace of Paris dreaded the approach of a hostile army, and believed themselves surrounded by thousands of traitors, ready to rise, open the gates of the city, and massacre faithful citizens. Only now parties were exactly reversed. In 1572, it was the Catholics who were in terror, the Catholics who plotted, the Catholics who massacred; in 1792, the victims were the adherents of Reform, the men and women in France who aspired to lift their country out of darkness into light, to put an end to corruption, ignorance, and superstition, to enfranchise France, to render it, in a word, true to its name and calling. In 1572, the conspirators and the assassins were the court, the clergy, and the most degraded among the people. In 1792 the position was entirely reversed; the victims were courtiers, priests, and the very outcasts of society. In 1792, the conspirators, the assassins, represented the cause of Reform; they conceived themselves its only sincere defenders.

Now those who had sown the wind reaped the whirlwind, the nation they had educated turned round upon them ; and never did a court and clergy suffer severer retribution than the court and clergy of France.

To the actual victims, not only is sympathy due, but reverence. Individually some may have been far more worthy than others, but, as a whole, they will remain enshrined in our loving memory as the martyrs of humanity. This, however, does not lessen our admiration and gratitude for that righteous law which is for ever vindicating the reign of Justice, not only in heaven but upon earth.

It was a terrible time for Paris and the Revolution. Longwy had been surrendered, Verdun, it was feared, would fall in the same way. Between Paris and the enemy there would then be only some raw levies, commanded by men who very likely were traitors. What was to save the Revolution from being crushed? The danger brought to the front men, who by sheer intensity and force of will seized power, and accomplished in a few days deeds which sent a shudder through Europe, and for a moment paralysed all who were not deeply affected by the horrible thought of counteracting danger by striking terror into the foe. Danton was Minister of Justice, and his words and deeds seem to show that he was aware of what was about to happen.

The day chosen to commence the Massacre of St. Bartholomew was a Sunday ; and again Sunday was the day on which the massacres of September, 1792, commenced. On the afternoon of September 2nd, twenty-four priests were removed from the Mairie to the Abbaye. The six coaches which conveyed them were followed by a fierce mob, who continually tried to open the doors and assault the prisoners.

When they arrived in the courtyard of the Abbaye, the first priest who stepped out was slaughtered on the spot; the next drew back, but he was dragged out and murdered; and such was the fate of each of the twenty-four priests. The murderers immediately left for the Carmelites, where two hundred priests were confined. With about one exception all were slain. 'If you are a priest you are lost,' said a workman, showing clearly that the people believed not only every priest a foe, but were determined on their extermination.

From the Carmelites, the executioners returned to the Abbaye, set up a sort of tribunal, of which the famous Maillard acted as president. But a few moments were allowed for decision, and the unhappy victim was hurried into the courtyard, and was immediately slaughtered.

Not only at the Abbaye and the Carmelites, but at the Châtelet and the prison of La Force, similar scenes were enacted; and then finally, as if to cap the horrors of the 2nd and 3rd of September, on the 4th the avenging hordes proceeded to the Bicêtre, where they slaughtered all or nearly all the miserable inhabitants, not even sparing the children. The estimate of the total number killed in Paris in those four days of September, 1792, differs as that of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. Thiers vaguely says from six to twelve thousand. Michelet gives an exact number: nine hundred and sixty-six.

When the trembling priests and sorrow-stricken nuns of Paris learnt that their worst fears were being realized, God gave them consolation. We may be sure on such a day they read their breviaries with more than ordinary devotion; and no portion could be more suitable than that appointed; for it depicted all the anguish of those who come to a premature

death, their anguish and the anguish of their friends, assuaging their sorrow and their fears by the promise of resurrection and eternal life.

‘My life is fallen into the pit, and they have laid a stone upon me. Waters have flowed over my head. I said, I am cut off. I have called upon Thy Name, O Lord, out of the pit. Out of the belly of hell cried I, and Thou heardest my voice. Thy brother shall rise again. I am the resurrection and the life : he that believeth in Me, although he be dead, shall live. I will deliver them out of the hand of death, I will redeem them from death. O Death, I will be thy death.’

Such, and many such words helped to give faith and courage to the generation of ecclesiastics of whom was now demanded all the righteous blood that had been shed in Paris since the days of Barthelmy Milon, and the first martyrs for Reform.

The greater the danger from without, the worse for the priests within. In April, 1792, transportation was substituted for extradition, and the unhappy priests who were to be sent to America or elsewhere suffered cruel treatment. At Nantes gangrene broke out among them. Sometimes the ships on which they were placed were fired upon. Crammed into the prisons, heaped up on the pontoons, or sent *en masse* to the scaffold, the French clergy experienced for a short while and in a concentrated form the suffering inflicted for so many years on the Protestants, who perished in such numbers in prison, on the galleys, and from the gibbet. At Lyons, Collet d’Herbois condemned to death in a single day one hundred and twenty priests. At Arras, Lebon caused their blood to flow in torrents ; and among the victims of the *noyades* at Nantes were many

priests. After October 3rd, 1793, it became death for any priest who had been sent out of the country to be found in France. Whoever recognised one might arrest him, and have him conducted to the prisons of the department, to be executed in four and twenty hours.

Those who had not been expatriated, but who, refusing to take the oath, continued to officiate, had to go about, as the pastors in former times had done, in disguise, hiding in the woods, or sleeping on the straw in some out-of-the-way place. 'Worn to skin and bone,' says one, 'I was nearly black; my food was nothing but a little soup, morning and evening.' Their chapels were kitchens and outhouses; the mass had to be said and the sacraments dispensed at midnight. Everything had to be done in secret, in fear of being surprised; and the burial service was sometimes limited to a few drops of holy water sprinkled on the corpse. It was exactly the story of the pastors of the desert over again.

Many churches were demolished, or turned into storehouses or manufactories, the images and pictures, the jewelled mitres, crowns, and other ornaments being sold or broken up. This closing and demolition of churches had had its counterpart under Louis XIV., who closed or demolished 813 Protestant temples.

But the Gallican Church had to go through a deeper humiliation still. Among the worst of her crimes was the way in which her bishops and priests had assisted at forced abjurations. Now she had to witness a number of persons who had received holy orders at her hands publicly abjuring the Catholic religion, and confessing that all the time that they had been priests it was mere acting. In November, 1793, a letter addressed to the National

Assembly by a priest was read, in which he offered to abjure, could he be assured of a pension ; and he added that if the Assembly would consider his case typical, they might induce others to pay homage to the truth. Here was an improvement on the abjuration schemes of Louis XIV. Then the Government offered bribes to turn honest men into hypocrites ; now the hypocrites asked to be bribed into becoming honest men. After this singular proposal the Archbishop of Paris and several curés appeared at the bar of the Convention, requesting to be allowed to regenerate themselves, and to become men by resigning their priestly functions. Gobel then laid down his mitre, cross, and ring, and after receiving the fraternal embrace put on the red cap. His example having been followed by several priests, the Bishop of Haute-Vienne went still farther, and not only laid down his office, but abjured Catholicism. Julian of Toulouse, a Protestant pastor who had become the worst kind of stockjobber, made the unnecessary statement that he too had no other god than Liberty, adding, with a humour of which he was probably unconscious, that his temple was the law, his worship the police. Gregoire, Bishop of Blois, alone resisted. The sections of Paris followed their leaders and abjured the Catholic Church ; and having nothing to put in its place they fell in with a worship which for a short time was inaugurated at Nôtre Dame, the Worship of Reason. In this folly the Convention itself was induced to take part, a mistake it shortly afterwards severely revenged on its seducers, who were nearly all sent to the scaffold, no one being more indignant at what had happened than Robespierre, and none more contemptuous than Danton.

Before this occurred, the Terror had been raging

some months, and not only the king but most of the leaders of the Girondist party had gone to the scaffold.

VII.

REAPING THE WHIRLWIND (*continued*).

WHEN the great Pharaoh, the King-Sun, *le roi soleil*, sat on his silver throne in Versailles, little did he dream that within a century his direct descendant, a crowned and anointed king of France, would be riding early one Monday morning to execution, condemned for high treason against the nation.

When we think of the sufferings and humiliation of Louis XVI., we must recall the *Sighs of Enslaved France*, and all the oppressions with which the *Grande Monarque* oppressed his people. We shall thus be more able to see the true significance of that night when the descendant and representative of Louis XIV. came up for judgment. Every city, every rural district, every institution in France, the episcopate, the priesthood, and the monastic orders, the royal house and old noblesse, law, commerce, medicine, literature, the arts, the shopkeepers, the peasantry, and above all the Reformed Churches, were represented among those who sat in judgment on Louis XVI.

Five Protestant pastors¹ were among the judges,

¹ There were, it is stated, seven Protestant pastors in the Convention. I have only been able to identify six. The most remarkable, after Rabaut St. Etienne, was Jean Bon St. André (1749-1813). Of a Protestant family of cloth manufacturers, Jean Bon was well educated. He entered the mercantile marine, but, ruined by several shipwrecks, he gave himself to the ministry, and was ordained at Lausanne.

two being sons of Paul Rabaut, who was yet living. On that gloomy night in which the fate of the unfortunate king was decided, Rabaut St. Etienne ascended the tribune, and voted in favour of detention until the peace, and subsequent banishment. Rabaut-Pommier voted for death with respite, the remaining three pastors for death unconditionally. Nearly five times as many deputies who were or had been members of the Catholic clergy voted for death, four being constitutional bishops. And after having done his utmost to prevent such a catastrophe, Vergniaud, the leader of the Girondists, also voted death, believing there was no other way of averting civil war.

Louis was condemned at three o'clock on Sunday morning, and met his fate shortly after ten a.m. the following day, January 21st, 1794. The scaffold

Pastor at Castres, he took a leading part in Montauban at the epoch of the States-general. Elected a deputy to the Convention, he took his seat with the Mountain, voted for death of Louis XVI., opposed the Girondists, and entered the Committee of Public Safety. He reorganized the French navy, and in 1794 virtually directed a brilliant naval combat, to prevent the seizure by the British fleet of 113 vessels laden with grain from America. The convoy safely reached Brest. He took no part in the 9th Thermidor, being away on a mission. Appointed consul at Smyrna in 1798, he was seized as a hostage by the Porte, and thrown into prison at Kerasoude, on the Black Sea, where he endured great suffering for three years. Set at liberty in 1801, he was appointed by the First Consul Buonaparte commissioner-general in the four departments of the Left Rhone, and after their annexation he was made Prefect of Mayence. After Leipzig, the hospitals of Mayence received an enormous mass of wounded soldiers, bringing typhus and other maladies. Jean Bou de St. André displayed his usual energy, and, throwing himself into the very centre of the work, was himself attacked by the fever, and after great suffering died, amidst the universal regret of the department he so well administered.

on the Place de la Révolution was surrounded by cannon and such a mass of troops that the spectators appeared only a thin line on the outskirts of the Place. Immediately after ascending the scaffold, he went to the other end and waited a moment, as if he expected the drums would cease to beat. A voice cried, 'Do your duty!' Four executioners seized the victim, who, as they put on the straps, cried with a loud voice, 'I die innocent!' How often had that horrible and barbaric roll of drums drowned the last words of the victims of the cruel despotism of which Louis XVI. was the representative!

Thiers says that on the way to execution he read from the Abbé Edgeworth's breviary the prayers for the dying; Michelet, that he read the Psalms. As he was without doubt a daily reader of the breviary, having ordered one to be brought directly he was shut up in the Temple; and as the journey occupied two hours, it is conceivable that both Thiers and Michelet are right. If he read the Psalms for the day, he was taught, at least in principle, what had brought the royal authority in his person to such a fate; words of penitence were put into his mouth, as the representative of the kings and rulers of France, and a cry full of anguish, but full of faith. In the midst of the thunder and the whirlwind, the lightning and the earthquake, God was judging the world in righteousness, leading His people through all its terrors as a shepherd his flock.

One of the worst crimes committed against the Protestants by Louis XIV. and his satellites was the carrying off their children, shutting them up in convents, and perverting their minds by a system of fraud and cajolery, until they came to believe the exact opposite to their fathers and mothers.

In December, 1685, appeared the terrible decree : ' Every child from five to sixteen years of age shall be taken away in a week.' As a law so sweeping could not be fully carried out, its partial execution increased its cruelty. Nevertheless it continued more or less to be acted upon during the whole period of persecution. What these unhappy children must have endured, at a time when it was thought impossible to bring up a child without the aid of the whip, and in institutions where that instrument was used as an incentive to piety, Heaven only knows ! Certainly these little Huguenots were not always lambs, as, for example, the two little girls whose vigorous and persistent opposition to captivity earned for them the title of the ' little lions of Meaux.' But the vast majority were timid little beings, who found it easier to lick the priest's hand than to spit in his face, and who soon succumbed to a clerical discipline, very different, let us hope, from the careless cruelty of some lay custodians, as in the case of little Brun, left by the Comtesse de Marsan to the mercy of her servants, who beat him, put him in the cesspool, and so often woke him up by blows that he finished at last by awaking no more. An extreme case, no doubt ; but there were many degrees between such a life and that of those young people educated under the direction of Fénelon, or at the royal house of St. Cyr, degrees in which were realized the infinite forms of suffering that a child separated from its natural protectors can experience. Worse than the sufferings of the children were those of the parents. The anguish of soul endured by many mothers and fathers through long years, as they yearned over their lost children, lost perhaps, as they might think, eternally, is but imaged by the picture of the Huguenot mother, stripped to her

waist and tied to a post, while her infant, placed a short distance off, cried lamentably for its natural food.

Such were the crimes which Louis XIV. ordered and encouraged, and such were the crimes to which many Catholics, especially Catholics in wealthy and titled families, made themselves accessory; for example, Madame de Maintenon, who carried off the daughter of her cousin, the Marquis de Villette, the sole cause of the abduction being the wish to educate her in the Catholic religion.

And now the time had come, and was coming, when the Exactor¹ demanded satisfaction for all these iniquities. Louis XIV. in this matter having been peculiarly guilty, on his house fell the most conspicuous judgment. After the Convention had put the king to death, the succession devolved on the dauphin, a child eight years of age, styled by the royalists Louis XVII., by the revolutionists 'the little Capet.' Placed, in 1793, under the tutelage and tutorship of the member of the Council General of the Commune, Simon, by trade a master-shoemaker, the little prisoner is said to have been made to learn the *Declaration of the Rights of Man*, and various patriotic songs. Whether Simon treated him cruelly or not, it was while under his care that the child was tricked or forced into signing certain charges against his own mother. Six months after Simon had resigned his office, and two days after he had been sent to the guillotine, a systematic process of cruelty began, under a new gaoler, which ended in the premature death of the little prisoner. Until the close of July, 1794, he had had several rooms and a large garden, was allowed to see his sister, and was provided with plenty of amusement.

¹ St. Luke xii. 58.

But from that time he was confined to one room and shamefully neglected. He gradually declined, and when, after six months, he was visited by a commission of the Commune, and then by a surgeon, he was found to have tumours in every joint, and to have fallen into a state of idiocy. Pity and indignation were awakened, and another commission ordered that there should be an immediate change in his treatment. But it was too late, and the poor little victim died June 8th, 1795, aged ten years.

A man shut up in the Conciergerie during the Reign of Terror heard the gaoler commence to close the great iron gate of the prison; he fell asleep, and dreamt that for hours he saw pass a procession of flayed human figures on flayed horses. The door closed with a great slam, and he awoke; he had only slept a few seconds. His imagination was, as it were, steeped in blood: he saw indeed the truth, but under a figure. Endless processions of victims passed day by day, for months, through Paris, about to pour the stream of their blood into the great human river flowing from the various scaffolds. And who were these victims? I doubt if we shall find one artisan, one peasant, one labourer, among them; they were the very greatest in the land: king, queen, princes and nobles of high degree, judges and generals, priests of all kinds, courtiers and high-born dames, a crowd of lawyers and literary men; persons, in fact, male and female, of *distinction*,—this was at least a necessary qualification to have a place in these terrible processions.

In the preceding chapters the story of the sufferings of the obscure servants of God at the hands of authority has been related; but that authority had been shared, in subordinate forms, by the whole body of the upper classes in France for centuries,

and it was their opinion that had really guided it and given form and colour to its laws.

To suppose that all this vengeance came upon the ruling classes in France solely on account of what the Protestants had endured for two centuries and a half would be a great mistake. As Jurieu, their most powerful champion and advocate, makes clearly manifest in his *Sighs of Enslaved France*, the sufferings of the Protestants were but an example of the oppression that ground down the whole nation.

And while the Exactor not only demands of these classes the full payment of their debts, it is strangely interesting to notice that He did not allow them to escape until they had paid the uttermost farthing. They had been willing accessories in the cruel system of robbing Huguenots of their children; under Napoleon I. they had to know what it was to have their own children taken from them by force. Lanfrey tells us that in 1806 the emperor ordered Fouché, the head of his police, to draw up a list of ancient and rich families, ten in each department and fifty in Paris, and to take from them by force such of their children as were between sixteen and eighteen years of age, and send them to St. Cyr, to be brought up for the imperial guard of honour. If they objected, no reason was to be given except that such was the emperor's pleasure.

We might pursue this subject in other directions and into minute particulars. Thus the Noyades at Nantes were anticipated in the reign of terror in 1560, except, says Sir James Stephen, 'that a prince of the Church, Charles, Cardinal de Lorraine, took the place of the butcher Carrier, and except that Catherine de Medici and her ladies of honour assumed in this dismal tragedy characters to which even in the frenzy of the Reign of Terror, the vilest

of the *poissardes* of Paris would scarcely have descended.' 'But if,' says another writer,¹ who has seen exactly what we have seen, 'the Noyades of Nantes had their counterpart in the Noyades of Amboise, so too were the Fusillades of Lyons but the repetition of the Fusillades in the same city two centuries before. . . . When the dead corpses of the Protestants were drawn through the streets or exposed to insult, who would have thought that before long the royal vaults of St. Denis would themselves be violated, or the bodies of apostate and persecuting kings and princes dragged from their coffins by the mob, tumbled in the mud, and exposed to indignity and outrage?'

'Man, greedy man, grasping at power supreme,
For thee created all things dost thou deem,
As thou shalt do, shall it be done to thee.

Fill up thy cup—thy cup of bitter wrong;
Do what thou wilt, whilst now thy hand is strong:
Yet know for all requital shall there be.

Thank God for this, nor curse your hapless fate,
Ye who upon the tyrants' pleasure wait;
In the due hour God's justice shalt thou see.

O wolf-like man, without one pitying thought,
Pity thyself; self-torture thou hast wrought:
As thou hast done must it be done to thee.'

VIII.

THE TERRORS: RED AND WHITE.

IN the history of the persecutions which the Reformed churches of France endured during the later half of the seventeenth and the first half of the

¹ *Lives of Robert and James Haldane*, pp. 441-43. By Alexander Haldane, 1855.

eighteenth centuries we hear little of Alsace. The reason is apparent; it had not long been annexed to France, and Louis XIV. was not so devoted to his religion as to promote its peculiar interests when by so doing he would injure his own. However, it is difficult to realize that during the last twenty-six years of the history we have been relating, Jean Frédéric Oberlin was the pastor of the Ban de la Roche. He went there in 1767, five years before the death of Louis XV., and he had been there twenty-two years before the Revolution commenced.

In a German magazine printed at Tübingen, an account appeared, written at the time, of a visit paid to the Ban de la Roche in 1793. The following extract from it not only gives a brief summary of a work and a character singularly typical of the best spirit of the times, but for reasons which will appear has an especial interest at this point of our history :

‘ During the space of nearly thirty years, in which M. Oberlin has been Christian pastor of this canton, he has completely changed it. The language is, from an unintelligible patois, altered into pure French, the manners of the people, without degenerating, are civilized; and ignorance is banished without injuring the simplicity of their character. Many of the women belonging to his parishes, trained for the purposes under his paternal care and instruction, assist him in his occupations. They teach reading, writing, and the elements of geography in the different villages where they reside; and through their medium the children are instructed in many necessary things, but, above all, have the seeds of religion and morality sown in their hearts. The excellence of these schools is so well established and appreciated, that girls of the middle

ranks are sent to them from distant parts, and the title of a scholar of Pastor Oberlin is a kind of testimonial of piety, cleverness, and gentle manners.'

The writer, proceeding to describe some of the incidents of his visit, says :

'In the evening we accompanied Oberlin a league on his way back to Waldbach. We had a wooded hill to ascend ; the sun was just setting, and it was a beautiful evening. "What sweet thoughts and pious sentiments you have uttered during this interesting walk !" said M. Oberlin, in a tone of confidence, for he considered us as friends to religion and servants of God. Our hearts were indeed in unison, and he related to us the circumstances of his past life, and spoke of his views and ideas, and the fear and love of God in a most touching manner. Sometimes we stood still to admire the beauties of Nature, and at others to listen with earnest attention to his impressive discourse. One moment was particularly affecting, when, stopping about half way up the hill, he answered in the softest tones to our question, "Ya, ich bin glücklich" ("Yes, I *am* happy"). The moon rose in all her majesty, and night drew on before we recollected that the time to return was approaching, when Pastor Oberlin exclaimed, "If five years are necessary to bring a ray of light from Sirius to this world, though travelling at the rate of twelve million miles in a minute, how much swifter must the communication of spirits be ! What is so swift as thought ?" And he then imaged to us the facility with which he apprehended we should approach one another in a future state.

'The following morning we set off to return the visit which he had paid us on the preceding day. We found the worthy pastor in his morning gown ; it was plain, but whole and clean. He was just on

the point of concluding a lecture; his pupils had, like their master, something soft, indeed almost heavenly, in their look.

‘The house stands well, and has, from the garden side, a romantic view; in every part of it that kind of elegance which is the result of order and cleanliness prevails. The furniture is simple; yet it suggests to you that you are in the residence of no ordinary man; the walls are covered with maps, drawings and vignettes, and texts of Scripture are written over all the doors. That above the dining-room door is, “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled,” and over the others are texts enjoining love to God and our neighbour.

‘Oberlin has a peculiarly happy method of improving occurrences, under the form of similes; and we are mistaken in supposing him a mystic. “The gospel,” said he, “is my standard. I should be afraid of trusting myself alone without it!”

‘It is surprising to witness the sound sense, refinement, and superiority of mind evinced by these simple peasants; the very servants are well educated, and are clothed with that child-like spirit which is one of the truest tests of real religion. . . .

‘I am writing¹ this at his table, whilst he is busy preparing leather-gloves for his peasant children. His family are around him, engaged in their different avocations; his eldest son, Frederic, is giving a lesson to some of the little ones, in which amusement and instruction are judiciously blended; and the *cher papa*, without desisting from his employ-

¹ The letter from which these quotations are made is dated March 11th, 1793; so that it was on the evening of March 10th, a Sunday, that the writer had the walk and conversation with Oberlin just related.

ment, frequently puts in a word. He took me this morning into his workshop, where there is a turner's lathe, a press, a complete set of carpenter's tools, also a printing-press, and one for book-binding. I assisted him in colouring a quire of paper, which is intended for covers of school books. He gives scarcely anything to his people but what has been, in some measure, prepared by his own or his children's hands. . . .

'The most perfect equality reigns in his house; children, servants, boarders, are all treated alike; their places at table change, that each in turn may sit next to him, with the exception of Louisa, his housekeeper, who of course presides, and his two maids, who sit at the bottom of the tables. As it is his custom to salute every member of his family, night and morning, these two little maids come very respectfully curtsying to him, and he always gives them his hand and inquires after their health, or wishes them good night. All are happy, and appear to owe much of their happiness to him. They seem to be ready to sacrifice their lives to save his. The following reply was made by one of his domestics, on his questioning her about her downcast looks during some trivial indisposition, "I fear, dear papa, there will be no servants in heaven, and that I shall lose the happiness of waiting upon you."'

What was occurring in France at this *very time*? At the opening of the month (March, 1793) the patriot armies had fled before the Austrians, and Liège was in the hands of the enemy. The news began to be known in Paris on the 5th of March, and from that time until the 10th sinister rumours poured in from day to day. A great reactionary movement had commenced at Lyons. In the workmen's quarter, that vast human warren, where the

tall black houses seemed to rise into the very skies, royalist agents were at work. In the west of France the reaction was still more advanced, the insurrection in La Vendée being just ripe. At this dark look-out, Paris grew more and more excited, and every day the temperature of the public mind rose by rapid bounds.

On Saturday, the 9th of March, the black flag flying from Notre Dame announced the country in danger. Thirty thousand volunteers were going to the front, and before going they demanded that their wives and children should not be left to the mercy of a reaction. Trained in tyrannical ideas, the majority could think of no other way of defending themselves than by the creation of some extraordinary power armed with despotic authority, and some already had the idea of a Revolutionary Tribunal. Sunday, March the 10th, the Convention met, and Liordet, brother of the constitutional Bishop of Evreux, drew from his pocket the project. He found it ready made among the archives of the reign of Louis XIV. It was only necessary to write Convention for king. Judges nominated by the Convention were to judge all those sent to their tribunal by decree of the Convention. No indictment, no jury, all means were permissible to get a conviction.

‘This is the Inquisition, it is worse than Venice!’ exclaimed Vergniaud, the Girondist leader, to which and other outcries the majority only listened so far as to retain the form of trial by jury.

It was seven o’clock in the evening, and the Assembly rose to separate, but Danton called upon them not to do so until they had voted the decree. However, they adjourned for two hours, at the expiration of which time they returned, the right

armed with loaded pistols, and determined, on the least appearance of a hostile movement, to rush upon their foes and kill all they could. The Terrorists, however, had no such intention, and in the midst of apparent calm the decree organizing the Revolutionary Tribunal was voted.

That same Sunday frightful scenes were occurring at Machecoul, in La Vendée. The peasants had risen, and massacred all those in the neighbourhood who represented the cause of the Revolution. They cut off the hands of Joubert, the president of the district, and killed him with a pitchfork; they tore in pieces the constitutional curé; they murdered the magistrate with a hatchet.

These scenes—the first act of the Red Terror, the first act of the White Terror—occurred on the very day that Oberlin talked to his visitor of the love of God as they walked on that Sabbath evening in the serene light of the moon through a country rendered happy and prosperous by one man being true to his calling, by one man alone seeking the public good rather than his own.

Oberlin had the same intense enthusiasm for the Revolution which possessed nearly all the good men of the time; his eldest son, a volunteer in one of the battalions of the Lower Rhine, fell in the August of this same year fighting for the Revolution. Could it have been otherwise? As a boy Oberlin was not heedless of the sufferings of his fellow creatures. Brought up in a Protestant family and living among Protestants, could he have failed to hear of the iniquities endured by his Protestant fellow countrymen? He was about four years of age when the pastors Ranc and Roger were hanged; five when the pastor Desubas suffered the same fate; twelve when the young pastor Benezet, arrested in Rabaut's

company, was hanged ; and fourteen years old when the pastor Tessier made the same glorious end ; and he had reached manhood, being twenty-two, when the pastor Rochette ascended the scaffold, and when Jean Calas was broken alive on the wheel. Moreover, had he not seen in the brutal ignorance and miserable destitution of the Ban de la Roche to what a condition careless and selfish rulers could reduce a people ; and in the success which attended his own efforts, what great results might easily ensue if those in authority really had the public good at heart ?

IX.

AN HOUR OF DARKNESS.

THE matin bell, calling to life the quaint old city ; the vesper bell, hushing into stillness its giddy pulse ; the cheerful chimes marking the hours of daily service—mass, prime, and compline ; the joyous tintinnabulation bursting forth on festive days ; the merry peal of marriage bells,—all were silent. From the churches rose no sound of prayer and praise ; from their doors no longer issued the gay procession, with its white-robed choristers and flaunting banners and smoking incense. For now they were closed and barred, and their altars, their images, and their holy emblems were all clothed in black. Now and then a solitary priest crept noiselessly along the street on his way to perform a private baptism or to carry the host to the dying. On Sunday a sermon was preached in the churchyard ; on Good Friday the cross was brought out and shown to the people. But with these exceptions feasts and fasts, Sabbath days and saints' days, passed alike unheeded. Thus in olden time the Church had displayed its power in laying under interdict a

city or a country. In 1793, the tables were turned, and the people laid the Church under interdict. All churches were closed and all public services forbidden.

Intended, no doubt, as a blow to the conspiracies of the nonconforming priests, it was entirely in the spirit of the time to make no exceptions, and Protestant temples were closed as well as all Catholic churches. In the departments of Gard and Lozère, as centres of conspiracy, all ministers of religion were required to live at twenty leagues from where they exercised their functions.

Paul Rabaut, refusing to lay down his 'quality' as a pastor and to re-enter the common class of 'citizens,' was thrown into prison. He had already suffered the loss of his eldest son, Rabaut St. Etienne. Included in the proscriptions of his party, the Girondists, St. Etienne escaped at first; but returning to Paris was discovered, and sent, as well as his generous hosts, who were Catholics, to the scaffold. Rabaut St. Etienne was guillotined Dec. 3rd, 1793; his friends suffered the day after.

That the pastors viewed the interdiction of public worship as a temporary requirement under the very extraordinary circumstances in which the nation found itself, seems probable, from the fact that they made no difficulty in acquiescing, and several appear for a time to have entered into other callings. A man like Oberlin could of course find useful work under any circumstances. He had a workshop, where he and his son made agricultural implements. But, tormented with the desire to supply the moral and religious wants of the people, he adopted the forms of the hour, set up a club in the church, and called the pulpit the tribune. The president then invited him to address the members, which he did much as

he ever had done. He accepted invitations to speak at the fêtes instituted in connexion with the new order of things, teaching the people that to become sincerely republican, they must individually and at all times prefer the public advantage to their own, choosing a profession or line of life, founding a family, educating their children, doing, in fact, everything with a view to public utility; above all, they must set an example to their children of a life well occupied in promoting the public prosperity.

But Oberlin's style of action was too original to be widely followed; in other places, and especially where the Terror in its worst forms prevailed, the Protestants reverted to the traditional upper chamber. At Nantes they met in various private houses. One place was an Indian warehouse, which stood on the Bridge of the Récollets, where removing the goods they used the shop as a place of worship. After a time they met in a room in an obscure street, which they furnished with chairs and forms, and a pulpit which could fold up in case of surprise. This state of affairs lasted from the close of 1793 to February 21st, 1795.

X.

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE REFORMATION ACCEPTED BY FRANCE, AND ITS CHURCHES ALLIED WITH THE STATE.

ON descending from the Mount of Transfiguration, our Lord was besought to heal a young demoniac. At the sight of the Master, the demon tore the boy, and fell foaming on the ground. The father, being asked how long this had come upon his son, replied, 'From a child; and oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him.' Jesus

bid the foul spirit come out of the lad, but, as it did so, it cried, and rent him sore, so that he was as one dead. Taking him by the hand, Jesus lifted him up, and he arose.

If we reflect on the long ages of feudal wars and oppressions through which the French people passed, on the sufferings they endured in consequence of the Saxon, Danish, and English invasions, and during the Hundred Years' War, the Italian War, and the religious wars; if we recall the horrible famines and pestilences, the terrible Jacqueries, the innumerable conspiracies and insurrections, the frightful massacres, dark fanaticisms, and perpetual executions, all climaxing in the final destruction of civil and religious liberty, accompanied by dragonnades, Camisard wars, and the other glorious Ludovician wars, with the ruin material, moral, religious ever increasing through the first half of the eighteenth century,—we shall find in this simple Gospel narrative a parable, which sums up in a few graphic words the whole history of France, from the break up of the empire of Charlemagne to that of the Ludovician despotism.

The Spirit of Jesus comes—manifested in a change of the public mind, a change of which Howard and Oberlin are representatives. The command goes forth, 'Come out of him, and enter no more into him'; and for a short time the struggle becomes frightful, it seems as if all former fits are concentrated in this. 'And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him, and he was as one dead, insomuch that many said, He is dead.'

What more truly depicts the convulsions of the Revolution? They seemed the concentration of all former evils, and at their close to leave the sufferer as one dead. Under the directory, the consulate,

and the empire, France was indeed morally dead. This universal syncope is seen in the state of the Protestant churches, those churches which through all former trials had never ceased to show some signs of life. Where were they after the Revolution? It is difficult to trace them. Several totally disappeared for a time, as for example, the church of Montpellier. And that of Nismes must have been in nearly the same condition; for although the free exercise of worship was again authorized in February, 1795, the decease, in the previous year, of its most illustrious pastor, Paul Rabaut (Sept. 25th, 1794), is not even mentioned in the registry of its consistory.

But the Reformed churches throughout France soon arose from their death-like swoon, and by the law of the 18th Germinal, year X. (April 7th, 1802), were incorporated into the State. This act, brought about by the will of the first consul, Buonaparte, may well be regarded as of doubtful benefit to religion. But there is a light in which it has not been noticed, and in which it is the sign of the triumph of the cause of the Reformation in France. By that act, the great object was attained for which all the early Huguenot martyrs had suffered and its warriors had fought. The theological principles and the ecclesiastical organization of the Reformed churches of France henceforth formed part of the constitution of the country, and were incorporated into its national life in exactly the same sense and on equal terms with those of the Roman Catholic Church.

When Napoleon Buonaparte determined to make the religious instincts¹ of men one of the bases of his

¹ Napoleon said it always affected him to hear the village church bell at Malmaison.

power, he saw clearly that any new organization of their various manifestations must accept as unalterable the principles of the Revolution—toleration and equality. His plan therefore was to make all forms of Christianity in France—the Roman Catholic Church, the Reformed Churches, and those of the Augsburg Confession—State Churches; and while leaving each to preserve its peculiarities within its own communion, to fuse them all into a common life with the State, by subjecting them equally to the same laws and regulations. Thus the Protestant Churches were interdicted equally with the Roman Catholic Church from having any relations with foreign powers or authorities; from having in their ministry any but Frenchmen, that is, subjects of the State; and even from publishing any doctrinal decision without the previous authorization of the Government.

And as he insisted on such alterations in the old organization of the Catholic Church in France as left the State master, so for the same reason he virtually suppressed the only institution in the Reformed Churches which, by its power to enable them to realize their unity, was likely to give him trouble. He would not even allow provincial synods, but only district synods composed of five consistorial churches; such district synod to be composed of the pastors and a certain number of laymen chosen by those who paid the highest amount to the taxes. Thus he sought to render the Reformed Churches at once conservative and submissive. As Samuel Vincent ¹

¹ Samuel Vincent (1787-1837), the son and grandson of pastors of the desert, was himself a pastor of the church at Nismes, and one of the most distinguished representatives of French Protestantism during the Restoration and Orleans monarchy.

said with much historic insight: 'By the law of the 18th Germinal, *the religions cease to exist by themselves and for themselves*, they are incorporated with the Government, and become an object of administration. Their course is regulated by law, and their discipline receives its sanction.'

But whatever the import of this determination of Buonaparte, there can be no doubt it was welcomed by the Protestants of the time as a precious boon, for they saw that it assured them two very important things: a legal, incontestable position; and an official pledge of their perfect equality with the Roman Catholics. The Nimois church had a bell, weighing fifteen hundredweight, placed on the pinnacle of their temple, formerly the church of the Ursulines, with this inscription, 'The Reformed of Nismes have caused this bell to be cast and hung, Napoleon Buonaparte, restorer of Christian liberty, being consul, the year XI. of the French Republic, and of Jesus Christ 1802.'

And there really was good reason for their joy, and even exultation, for the law of the 18th Germinal clearly meant the final triumph of their long contention; the Protestant religion within the pale of the constitution being a symbol and pledge of the fact that since the Revolution the principles of the Reformation, so far as they concerned national polity, had been recognised by France.

De Felice, describing the Colloquy of Poissy, says, 'The Reformed pastors wished to treat with the priests on equal terms, taking the Bible for the supreme arbiter of the controversy, and giving the heads of the State the right to pronounce without appeal between the two parties.' The equality of the two religions before the law, and the absolute supremacy of the civil authority, these two prin-

ciples are the leading ideas of the law of the 18th Germinal.

This claim of equality was one the Protestants had ever maintained, for it was implied in what was the justification of their position—the right of private judgment. Beza firmly maintained it throughout the controversy referred to. Asked by the Cardinal of Lorraine if the Reformed would sign the principal articles of the Augsburg Confession, he replied, ‘Will you and the other prelates?’ ‘We are not equals, you and us,’ responded the cardinal. ‘Since,’ said Beza, absolutely ignoring the possibility of such inequality, ‘you do not wish to sign these articles, it is not fair to ask us to do so.’

‘Taking refuge in a subtlety,’ says Bossuet, to whom the idea of Beza really believing in his equality to the cardinal was incomprehensible. The Reformer, however, was speaking with the truthfulness of a child; he had lost the idea of inequality between the ministers of Jesus Christ, although he still admitted it between subjects and their rulers. There Bossuet himself could hardly have outdone the early Calvinistic divines. The authority of the civil ruler, according to the French Protestant Confession of Faith, not only extended to the maintenance of the second table of the Commandments, but also to the repression of sins against the first. The Huguenots were therefore the most thorough of State Churchmen, Calvin’s rule at Geneva being almost as complete an identification of Church and State as the Hebrew theocracy itself. The French Reformers contended therefore not for independence, but that they and their principles had a right to form an integral part of the State, on terms of equality with those who still adhered to the Papal

Church, and maintained Papal doctrines and practices. Their final separation and consolidation into communities distinct from the nation was a position they struggled against for generations, and only accepted as a dire necessity. In this view they conceived themselves justified in devoting to their mode of worship churches and even cathedrals, wherever they were in a considerable majority; and they never lost an opportunity of identifying themselves with the civil power, or of taking possession of it where they had the opportunity. With the Huguenots, the Church and the State under such circumstances became almost identical. The Huguenot commonwealth in La Rochelle is the most complete instance of it; but during the civil wars many examples occurred of the way they fused Church and State.

Their idea of Reformation consequently included the regeneration of both Church and State, as one indivisible body politic. This being the case, we must look for the final success of their long and painful struggle, not so much in the exaltation and extension of the ecclesiastical societies in which they were forced for so long a time to exist against their will outside the State, but in the acceptance of the French nation of the principles they represented, and for which they had for so many generations contended.

And such was the thoroughness with which the repentant State opened its gates to the Protestants, that in two or three years we see it adopting as the bases of its Constitution the main principles for which the Reformers had suffered or had been forced to contend:

Liberty of Conscience.

Liberty of Thought.

Liberty of Worship.

Equality of all before the law.

Participation of all personally, or by their delegates, in making the law.

Capacity of all, without any distinction except that of virtue and talent, to fill public offices.

But there was another great principle for which it could not be said that the Reformers had suffered or contended, but which, however, was not the less a distinctive feature of their ecclesiastical system, and one they would have certainly applied to the nation. 'The school,' according to Michelet, 'is the first word of the Reformation, and the grandest. It writes at the head of its revolution: Universal instruction; schools for boys and girls; free schools, where all are seated together, rich and poor.' And this is clear from the terms of the Edict of 1593, which permits the Reformed to build and rent colleges for the instruction of their youth, and to hold *public schools*. Each church had a regent, or schoolmaster, to teach reading and arithmetic to the children, and in centres of importance there was another to teach Latin; and this instruction was in most cases nearly gratuitous, no payments of importance being made except by the rich. Had the Huguenots triumphed in the sixteenth century, it is evident education in France would have been what it became in countries where their principles were triumphant—Scotland, Holland, Switzerland.

No sooner, then, do we find them within the pale of the law than this great reformation begins. Condorcet proposed a plan of universal education which should offer to every individual of the human species the means of providing for his wants, of assuring his well-being, of knowing how to exercise his rights, and of understanding and fulfilling his duties.

Condorcet's proposals with some modifications were accepted by the Convention ; and to-day France, with its public nurseries, its infant schools, its primary or communal schools, its colleges and lyceums, and its technical schools of all kinds, appears a vast *Ban de la Roche* : the spirit of Oberlin is everywhere.

It has been shown that the spirit of despotism so long triumphant could not be exorcised without a struggle. This is the secret of the truly awful scenes which accompanied the Revolution, and this also is the secret of the innumerable reactions, the many convulsions, that France has since had to pass through. But whereas prior to that change in public sentiment which commenced about the middle of the last century the cause of the Reformation was ever losing ground, since the Revolution it has ever been gaining ; and we may with confidence affirm that the sight of France to-day must be an infinite consolation to that great cloud of witnesses, the martyrs and heroes of Reform, who sacrificed everything to bring about this present happy state of things. For there is no legal impediment to-day to prevent France becoming all that the most spiritually-minded amongst them could by any possibility have desired. The State has done its part, and the rest now remains with the Church. What hope is there that it will be true to its calling?—a calling more distinctly providential than that of any Church existing. Will the Reformed churches of France take the great position to which they have been so manifestly called? Will they take the van of progress, and infuse the whole nation with a more profound religious life? or will they fall as laggards in the rear? A more important question could scarcely be raised, for on it hangs the religious future of France.

To offer any proximate solution, we should have carefully to study and to trace the history of the Reformed churches in France since their establishment in 1802. This would be a large subject, impossible to treat properly without much study and experience. It would prove most interesting, presenting features very different from those of the older struggle.

As that is known by a title in French history, *La Reforme*, which our translation, the Reformation in France, but inadequately represents, but the full meaning of which the work I now conclude has ever kept in view; so such a sketch would have to be named *La Reveil*, a word for which we should find similar difficulty in giving its full equivalent in our own language. But the work will some day be done, and while it records the results of the apostolates of such men as Robert Haldane, Alexandre Vinet, and Adolphe Monod, it will point to a still greater awakening yet needed, if the Protestant churches of France are ever to rise to their true calling.

THE END.

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