ADMIRAL COLIGNY,

AND THE

RISE OF THE HUGUENOTS.

BY THE

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PREFACE.

THIS work is something more than a biography: the reader may find it nothing less than a history. It may be both, and still preserve the unity of design and of method. In general, the acts of a people are but the deeds of its representative men. This is especially true of the Huguenots during the periods herein treated. Amid the distractions of persecution and war they did not—they could not—act so much in a body, or as a Reformed Church, as through their leaders. Their representatives made for them their history. To form a correct idea of that peculiar people, to whom a distinctive character has always been attributed, it is not necessary to portray the life of every earnest actor nor the development of every particular Church. This would give us too much sameness. So of the various persecutions: there is a horrible monotony of details in them all. The trial and execution of one martyr are quite like those of another; therefore martyrologies grow tedious. The butchery in one village is frightfully similar to that in another. Hence the history must be eclectic. It may be seen in the record of a few lives, a few churches, a few persecutions. Even their enemies act monotonously; their frequent edicts run in almost the same mould; they constantly repeat their deeds of violence. My aim has been to select what is representative, or give fair specimens of life and endurance.

One man occupies the central position. Upon Admiral Coligny almost the entire history hangs. He is a sort of personifi-

cation of Huguenotism, which, at one time, was in danger of being a Protestant chivalry—a religion in the hands of warriors. Himself a nobleman, he greatly helped to turn it from the path of the whirlwind. Yet the Reform was in need of noble patronage, and he and his brothers represented the young nobility which was led out of moderate Romanism into an earnest Protestantism. They were the first powerful chiefs to adopt the Reform. They set the example to hundreds of others. Coligny is the eminent lay chieftain of the truly religious Huguenots. He is intimately allied to the Prince of Condé and the political Huguenots. (This important distinction has often been too much overlooked.) He holds a high place in the state, in the Reformed Church and in the Huguenot army. He links the Protestants to the king and the court. There are certain foreign influences which greatly affect his people, and to these I have given no more than due attention; in these he is the conspicuous leader against whom the pope and Philip II. take their deadly aim when they dictate extermination. He and the Prince of Orange grasp hands and for a time keep the whole papal forces at bay. Upon him, in a great degree, the St. Bartholomew massacre turns, and he is the first and prominent victim of that awful day. He is, then, the chief historical character of that age in France.

His family ties gave him a peculiar position. By birth and marriages he was allied to the ruling houses of France, closely to the Montmorencies and the Bourbons, and, through them, more distantly, to the Guises, the D'Albrets, and even the royal house of Valois. His wife, Charlotte Laval, a more than representative woman, allied him to several other noble families. All this had some importance in the time of a decaying feudalism. Beyond this, he was more fully in correspondence with Calvin than any other of the French nobles. Upon no man in France (except Beza when he was there) did Calvin so much depend, and the reliance was mutual. Not to recognize the great influence of the Genevan Reformer in the history of the Huguenots is to treat the subject with a partiality inexcusable. While seeking to throw additional light upon this point, I may still say that my

limits did not allow me to do full justice to the subject. But the inquirer may satisfy himself by going to the source which I have found so replete in historical matter—*Calvin's Letters*, Presbyterian Board of Publication. It is hoped that the present work may serve as an exponent of the many letters which relate to France.

Before the reader are brought three periods of the French Reformation: 1st. That of Repression (1512–1555), when the vain attempt was made to reform the Papal Church. There was little open preaching, but the psalm-singing was tremendous, and there were hosts of secret believers in the gospel. 2d. That of Organization (1555–1562). The history of the first Presbyterian Church in Paris and the account of the first national synod have received a special treatment which may be interesting. The rapid growth of churches in seven years must appear astonishing. It refers us to the introduction of two new agencies—that of a ministry and that of a Reformed nobility to sustain the missionary labours. To these is mainly due the rise of the Huguenots as a religious body. The increase of churches was severely checked in the year 1562, and many organizations were destroyed. 3d. That of Resistance (1562 to the edict of Nantes, 1598). It is the period of the civil wars, but the present work closes with the St. Bartholomew massacre (1572), after which an almost entirely new class of men appear as the representatives of Protestantism in France. Even that terrible event did not cause the "fall" of the Huguenots. It was a shock from which they recovered. It tended to purify them from politics and lead them nearer to God. Even by means of it they rose to a nobler spiritual height.

That a historian may express his own opinions upon disputed points has been taken for granted by several writers who have assured us of their impartiality, and have impeached the Huguenots before the world as if it were the Calvinistic type of the Reform that caused the troubles in France, and not the Reform itself. Perhaps one may venture to answer the impeachment and still not be partial nor guilty of prejudice. When the Hu-

guenots are charged with a want of satisfactory policy, it should be remembered that they were struggling for conscientious principles. We do not claim that they were free from all rude proceedings. We admit certain deeds of violence and rough retaliation. We go farther—we state them. And farther still, as Calvin and their wisest leaders did, we condemn them. But even here a fair judgment cannot be passed on them without having in mind the trains of events that preceded them. To know whether they were lawless we must know how far there was any just law. Let the facts be stated and the reader thrown upon his own judgment of them. If I have given considerable space to certain movements that seem to be political or military, it is because they bore so powerfully upon the religious affairs. By slurring over the one class of events we misunderstand the other. They run on together as they do in such portions of inspired history as the books of the Kings, Ezra, Esther and Daniel.

The authorities consulted are—1st. Extreme Romanists, such as Daniel, Maimbourg, Tavannes, Blaise de Montluc, Davila Pallavicino; 2d. Moderate Romanists, as De Thou (Thuanus), Castelnau, Brantome, Anquetil, Garnier, Mezeray, Sarpi, Lacratelle, Perau; 3d. Skeptical, as Bayle and Voltaire; 4th. Protestants, as Beza, D'Aubigné (Theo. Agrippa), La Noue, Duplessis-Mornay, Sully, Cayet Victor Palma, Mémoires de Condé, Benoit, Laval and Puaux. The Massacre of St. Bartholomew, by Henry White, London, 1868, came fresh to me while revising my manuscripts for the last time. Other works consulted are named in the references, and yet my researches have extended to many volumes more, among which are those rich French collections entitled "Mémoires relatifs à l'Histoire," and "Documents sur l'Histoire de France." So far as possible I have consulted the contemporary writers.

No biography of Admiral Coligny, originally written in English, has come to my knowledge. The translations have been small books. My long search was rewarded by obtaining the Gasparis Colinii Castellonii, Magni Quondam Franciæ Amiralii,

Vita, MDLXXV.,* written so soon after the great massacre that the names of the author, the press and place of publication were prudently omitted. The author, doubtless, was Cornaton, a gentleman of Coligny's suite, and an eyewitness of much that he relates. My copy is evidently one of the first edition. So rare is the little book that I do not find any modern writer naming it. Before obtaining it I had the "Life" which appears in Clarke's Martyrology (1770), the "Memoirs of Gasper de Colligny" (Edinburgh, 1844), which is a translation of the "Mémoires de Messire Gasper de Colligny . . . à Paris, 1665;" and had consulted "The Lyfe of the most Godly, Valiant and Noble Captaine, and Maintener of the trew Christian Religion in Fraunce, Jasper Colignie Shatilion . . . . 1576" (Harleian Miscellany.) To my surprise I found that all these were only versions of the Vita Colinii.

The French have been more voluminous on this subject. Brantome (Hommes Illustrés) gave more than usual space to his personal reminiscences of the Admiral. The fullest early "Vie" was by Gatien de Courtilz de Sandras, 1686 (my edition 1691). The Abbé Perau devoted two volumes to him in the Hommes Illustrés (1747), and a Vie de Andelot. As a model for his son, M. de la Ponneraye published a Histoire de l'Admiral Coligni, in 1830. In the Seances de l'Académie, 1848, are the Souvénirs Historiques sur l'Amiral de Coligny. Valuable articles are found in the Dictionnaire Historique de Moreri, Biographie Universelle and La France Protestante, par MM. Haag. Among so many biographers and historians of all beliefs there is a general agreement concerning the lofty character and motives of the admiral.

It was while searching in Paris for the spot where Coligny was murdered that I formed the purpose of which this work is, in part, the expression. Since that day (1862), the Huguenots have received more and more attention in popular literature—a proof of an increasing demand among the people. If this work

* Bought at the sale of the library of the late Wm. Jenks, D. D., the compiler of the Comprehensive Commentary.

shall help to supply it, the labours expended will not be in vain. The object is not to rekindle the old fires of animosity or encourage a party spirit in religion, but to incite the heart to gratitude to God that the day of persecution is past—if indeed it be past—and to lead the people to recount the price of their civil and religious liberty, as well as to renew the spirit of piety exhibited by those who suffered for the gospel.

W. M. B.

CHICAGO, ILL.

ADMIRAL COLIGNY.

CHAPTER I.

A RISING GENERATION.

(1517–1547.)

IN an outburst of grief Pope Adrian VI. exclaimed, "How much depends on the times in which even the best of men are cast!" The words were engraved upon his monument. If his short three years (1521–'23) in the papal chair had been thirty, there might have been some compromise between the old Romanism and the new Protestantism, especially in France. It was possible, despite the intense opposition of all who cried, "Rome must not concede that she is in error. Reforms are dangerous." He was anxious to repress abuses. His strong idea was, a reformed Papacy. In France the new idea was, a papalized Reform. On this half-way ground Meaux* and Rome might have struck

* The light dawned upon Lefevre as early as 1512. He and his student, William Farel, with the brothers Roussel, were driven out of Paris by the Sorbonne. At Meaux they made the first experiment, in France, of a Reformed Church (1521–'23), but not fully separate from the Roman see. The defection of Bishop Briçonnet was its ruin. The two churches of Montbeliard and Metz hardly belonged to France. They were organized by Farel. In my "William Farel" considerable space has been given to this period of the suppressed Reform in France, 1512–1525.

hands. Death removed the pope. Persecution worse than death scattered the flock gathered under Lefevre and Farel —the one the patriarch of the new movement in France, the other the pioneer of the grander work in French Switzerland.

Reformers may live to see their policies fail, while their principles are only coming to the full harvest. Lefevre, Roussel and Queen Margaret of Navarre were at the head of a new religious party. They put the earnestness of their lives into the work of translating and circulating the word of God; preaching the gospel and raising up an host of preachers, whose voices had the clear ring of saving truth; sending into the pulpits of the old churches men who boldly told the listening crowds how to win eternal life; comforting martyrs and giving refuge to scores who barely escaped with their lives. It was a very peculiar movement. This band of "gospellers" was fearless for Christ, but afraid of the Church. Its policy was to reform abuses in the Roman Church, but not to depart from that Church. It held to the mass, but sought to engraft the sermon (*le prêche*)—two words on which everything was hanging. The mass was the symbol of Popery; "the preach," of Protestantism. The union was impossible. Rome would not tolerate the Reform. She suppressed the preaching. The crown, the clergy and the Sorbonne waged against this party the terrors of fire and sword. The policy failed in the forenoon of the sixteenth century, but cropped out again in the days of Fénelon and the Jansenists.

Yet the principles did not fail to secure a wonderful result. Those doctrines of true faith, hope and charity; those Testaments, tracts, poems and hymns cast among the common people, who hid them in their homes and hearts and worshipped the Lord in secret; those glowing words of priests who were Protestants in regard to Christ, while

Romanists on the side of the Church; and those testimonies of martyrs at the stake,—could not be fruitless. Happily for the people in their houses, there was "night there." The darkness was the pavilion of Jehovah. We see in the little meetings of neighbours by night, to read the Scriptures and pray, a striking feature of the Reform at that period. Believers were multiplied. As a full crop of corn has been raised with scarcely a shower of rain upon it, and dependent upon the dews, there being a constant stirring of the good soil, so grew up a sturdy race of Huguenots under the nightly dews of grace, while the persecutors did the ploughing in their terrible way. But until the year 1555 these *Christaudins* were a hidden people.

Two forces were needed to bring out of this dark seclusion the Reformed Church of France. One was a class of ministers who would dare to preach openly and organize the Reform; the other, a class of nobles and chiefs* who would dare to profess the faith, shield the preachers and support the new churches. During this period of repression, the converts were almost entirely of the middle classes—the tradesmen, the artists, the thinking people, the men of education, lawyers, teachers, physicians were among them. The peasantry, or "the masses," were the last to be reached. Rural tenants were waiting to see what the lords of the soil would do, or for some kind pastor to enter their cottages and tell them the truth. John Calvin was the human agent in supplying the needed ministry. The three brothers of Chatillon became the head of the Reformed nobility and gentry; of these the chief was Admiral Coligny. He is the important link between the Genevan Reformer and the Protestant Church in France, and the

* Only three or four Reformed nobles appear from 1515 to 1555—Farel, Berquin, Anemond de Coct and the Chevalier Gaudet. We do not forget Margaret of Navarre.

correspondence between these two men is one mark of the rise of the Huguenots as a powerful religious body—a body which cannot be understood unless the large influence of Calvin and Coligny be recognized. Of the one no specific biography is here required; of the other a history is essential, for he is the representative man.

We are then to trace the history of a man whose noble deeds justify a glance at his noble birth. He lived in an age when rank was chiefly determined by blood. Preferment was an inheritance. It was possible for the plebeian to rise; the patrician had already been born upon an eminence. Nobility gave position, but it proved the severe test of character. Without the advantages of noble ancestry, Coligny could hardly have reached his point of external greatness; with them, if not in defiance of them, he attained to a loftier height, establishing his merits upon internal goodness.

Certain hardy pioneers, who made themselves a home in the deep forests west of Lake Leman, and not far from the ancient battle-field of Julius Cæsar and Ariovistus, were named "The Colony." The chief family took the name of Coligny.* The lands were held in the name of the lords of Coligny, who rose to such greatness that they assumed the powers of a sovereign house. The family arms bore a crowned eagle. They coined money, levied taxes, decided upon the life or death of their subjects, and made war with vengeance in the days of chivalry. The ruins of their castle may still be found in Bresse. By little and little they seem to have been reduced by the dukes of Savoy. From Geneva, which had muttered threats to keep his forefathers in

* Vita Colinii. "De Colonia vocabantur; postea . . . Colinii dicti sunt." Old French, "Colognac" in Franche Comté. "The towns of Nantua and Monlouet, with their dependencies, formed part of the family domain."

subjection, was to come the voice of persuasion that would bring Admiral Coligny into Christian liberty. Passing over "the infinite number of great men" who sprang from this family, we find one Jean de Coligny,* the grandfather of our hero, growing weary of his ancestral home. Not long before Charles the Bold of Burgundy became the terror of France, this John of the Colony removed to his large estates between the valleys of the Loire and Yonne, and there around the castle walls grew up the straggling town of Chatillon-sur-Loing. Loyal at heart to his French king, he refused to join with the nobles in their opposition to the taxes, their uprising and their bold defiance of Louis XI. at the gates of the capital. When Charles the Bold was sweeping around Paris to capture it, he bravely fought against the rash liege-lord of his fathers, and was one of the valorous cavaliers who claimed the victory at Montlhèry, which still is called "the cemetery of the Burgundians."

His mantle fell upon his son Gaspard, who fought under the banner of Charles VII., took lessons from the Chevalier Bayard, and saw Burgundy united to France. He shared with his young king in the conquest of Naples, an event which has been made the dividing-point between ancient and modern history. When Naples was lost, he aided his next king, Louis XII., in the attempts upon Milan, a prize not to be won even by the long wars in which the sons of both king and captain were to engage. Francis I. made him grand-marshal, and he was one of the chieftains at the

* Moreri, Dict. Historique, gives a full genealogy back to the tenth century, with an array of abbots and crusaders. "Their great wealth enabled them to make many rich religious endowments." In 1146 Humbert de Coligny followed Conrad II. to Jerusalem; again he went, leading six sons. "The members of this illustrious house had been mixed up with the great movements of France for nearly five hundred years."—*Vita Colinii.*

interview with Henry VIII. on the "Field of the Cloth of Gold."

Gaspard had proved himself "one of the marvels of his age," when he allied himself to the proudest family of France. No man was greater in his own eyes than Anne de Montmorency; in the eyes of the people none was more worthy of the promotions reserved for him. His sister Louisa was the widow of Frederic de Mailly, one of the first noblemen of Picardy. Among her several children was Madelaine, whom we shall meet as an ornament of the Reformation. Louisa held a high rank at the royal court, and was among the few ladies whose hearts were pure and names free from scandal. In 1514 she became the wife of Gaspard de Coligny. To them were given three sons, Odet, Gaspard and Francis, who were to adorn the family name by their virtues and their heroic services in the cause of truth and liberty. The star of the Reformation, seen by Lefevre, Zwingli and Luther, and shining into his mother's heart, was presiding over the birth of Gaspard, February 16, 1517, at Chatillon-sur-Loing.

It must give delight to a good father to see his own tastes and spirit transmitted to a son. The elder Gaspard soon noted the military tendencies of his filial namesake. With a board of ivory soldiers, drum and little sword, he made the game of war his chief occupation. Before he was five years old he stood with his father and drilled a regiment of men. Greatly pleased with one soldier, he gave him the sword, saying, "I shall reward every one who does well his duty." His father was so pleased that he embraced the child, saying, "Either I am mistaken, or the age will speak of you." To test his courage he was asked to fire one of the cannons. At first he flinched, and the soldiers shouted that he was afraid. "You think me afraid!" he exclaimed. "You shall see." The instant roar proclaimed his courage.

The senior Gaspard was made chief-marshal of the army, and he soon had work to call him from home. The Spaniards were attacking one coast and the English the other. A great army was laying siege to Fontarabia on the borders of Spain, and the garrison was enduring a famine. The marshal was ordered to lead thither a relieving force with the utmost speed. On the road he overheated himself and was thrown into a malignant fever. At Aqs he found that he must die. He made a will, commending his wife and children to the care of his king and his brother-in-law Montmorency, and died on the ninth day of his illness. It was the St. Bartholomew of 1522. France lost a valiant general and the king a wise counsellor, for the marshal had "a fine head and a good arm."*

The grief of the three fatherless lads found some solace in their mother's love and in their affection for each other. Whoever was loved by the one was loved by the other two, and whoever offended one had an affair to settle with the entire three. "They presented a striking example for the youth of our age, for brothers sometimes show more of hatred than of love." Their uncle, faithful to his trust, gave attention to their wants, and they began to learn his character.

Anne de Montmorency was proud of four things: that Queen Anne had given him her name, that he was descended from Pharamond, the first French nobleman who had received baptism, whence the family motto, "God help the first Christian baron,"† that he was hated by the en-

* Brantome, Marshal de Chatillon.

† "Dieu aide au premier Chretien." Add to the paternal line the descent on the mother's side from Pharamond, and Coligny had a genealogy before which the pretentious Guises might turn pale. The honour was important in that age of decaying feudalism, however imaginary the ancestral line. A Montmorency once said to a Basque-

vious Guises, and that the king could not well do without him in managing the affairs of government. He had played with Francis I. in his childhood. He was a friend of the king's sister, Margaret, who persuaded her brother to give him the baton of Marshal of France soon after the death of the senior Gaspard Coligny. He might have become a friend to the Protestants if he had not been too great a politician. In war he excelled all his rivals, and he may have taken delight in telling his nephews how his honest father had sent him forth in his youth to break his first lance in Italy, under the renowned Gaston de Foix, with only five hundred francs in his purse, two horses and an outfit of arms, saying to him, "None can know themselves, the world and the realities of life, unless early taught to rough it." He had roughed it in many a severe campaign, acquired wisdom and keen penetration, but had not lost his princely manners, nor his harsh and violent temper, nor his narrow bigotry.

In the choice of teachers for the two older brothers, Madame de Chatillon showed her sympathy with the new spirit of Reform. One was Nicolas Berault, professor of law, orator, editor, author, and no mean rival of the most eminent scholars of his age. Erasmus had been his guest at Orleans, and urged him to throw the charms of his tongue into his pen and write eloquent books for the world. The sage remembered the scholar in prefaces and dedications. Berault commented upon some of the Psalms, and his son Francis embraced the Reformed religion, wrote Latin poetry and taught Greek with honour. The other teacher was the old soldier Prunelai, proficient in the social and military accomplishments.

The mother and uncle intended that Gaspard should be

Celt, "Do you know that we date a thousand years back?" The rejoinder was, "We have left off dating."

educated for the priesthood and Odet for a gentleman, as he was by birth the heir to the estates. But Gaspard had his mind set upon a military life. Berault was ordered to persuade him to study for the Church. "If he should enter the priesthood and become a bishop or a cardinal," said Montmorency, "he would make you rich presents and load you with benefices."

"I am not seeking my own interest, but the good of my scholars," replied Berault, who told Gaspard of his uncle's wish, pointing out the advantages of being a cardinal and also the dangers of such a dignity, but advising him to follow his inclination.

"I shall not be a cardinal," answered Gaspard; "and rather than study for that profession, I will not look into another book." It was agreed that Odet should study for the Church, giving to his brother the heirship to the estates. Their teacher guided them in the ways of obedience, temperance, truth and religion. They firmly believed in the Roman Catholic Church. They were free from the vices so common among the youth of their times. In later years Gaspard "had two things in him that seemed extremely opposite: a great vivacity of wit and a very slow speech, so that one would have said that he mused upon what he was going to say. The politicians would have it to be a piece of cunning, to gain time to observe those with whom he had to do. . . . It is much more likely that it was a fault contracted by frequenting with his master, Berault, in whom the same thing was observed."* Since Gaspard refused to be a cardinal, Montmorency asked that a red hat might be given to Odet, who was fond of repose and study. The hat was forthcoming in a ship which was bringing to France the craftiest woman who ever troubled a modern kingdom.

Catherine de Medici was an orphan of eleven years in a

* Bayle, Art. Berault.

convent when her uncle, Pope Clement VII., besieged her native Florence. "Put her in a basket," said the city council, "and hang her over the walls as a target for the enemy's cannon." But she was spared. She had many a narrow escape while tossed from one cloister to another, and she began to think that she must be a nun. Happy for France if she had taken the veil! At the age of thirteen she was betrothed to Henry, second son of Francis I., the greater union being between the Pope and the French king against the emperor Charles V. Henry was fourteen days older than herself. She then seemed an innocent child, wonderfully captivating and betraying none of those enchantments which proved the subtle poison for destroying heresy. In 1533 a brilliant retinue shared in her pride as she sailed on the Mediterranean, her large eyes sparkling and her voice as clear as a bell when she said, "I'm to be the daughter-in-law of the great king of France." The wedding was celebrated at Marseilles, and on "the tragic pair," was pronounced that papal blessing which was to prove the curse upon the French nation.

The overjoyed pope showed his gratitude by giving four red hats to the king to deck the heads of four French papists, and thus bind them to Rome. One was for Odet de Chatillon, seventeen years of age. To qualify him for the cardinalship he was made bishop of Beauvais. How well the hat fitted him and how wise the pope was in his present the coming pages will show, but it certainly did not evince papal infallibility. "The pontiff gave it from political motives, calculating that the influence of the Coligny family would aid him in making good his claim to his large possessions in France."* Brantome tells us that he knew the cardinal well, "and whenever I recall his name it appears to me that France never possessed a more discreet,

* Vita Colinii.

courteous and generous man. I have heard those who knew him at the court of Francis I. and Henry II. say that the disgrace of his friends never shook his favour to them, nor could his very enemies help but love him, so frank was his face, so open his heart and so gentle his manners, for he never was rude to any one."

At eighteen, Gaspard, now the lord of Chatillon, was at college in Paris, where he was regarded as the pattern of diligence and morality. The moral standard was very low among the students. He and his brother Andelot were in a dangerous whirlpool, exposed to every sort of strife, jealousy and intrigue. It was a rude age, and we may expect rough scenes in a college at stormy Paris. Even the professors were not all studious of peace. Morin, the provost of the faculty, was one day going to the class-room with his sword at his side, when a gentleman of Poitou met him and pressed him to make a trial of weapons. In self-defence the provost drew his sword. The thrusts became lively. By a mishap the offender received a wound, fell back and expired in the arms of his friends. He had two brothers in the college, who rushed toward the provost, "already more dead than alive." Coligny was no longer willing to remain a silent spectator of the affair, and he stepped forward to check their rage. He told them how it had come to pass, but they were not in a mood to hear an argument in behalf of his teacher. They made a thrust at him and would have slain him, had not a band of students ranged themselves upon his side. Morin escaped their revenge upon himself, but they resolved to take it upon young Coligny.

Professor Parini interfered. He sent the two brothers to prison, where their chagrin made them doubly fierce. The older one challenged Coligny to a duel, to be fought as soon as he should be at liberty. Duels were sanctioned at

that day by high authority. They were supposed to be the only means of maintaining injured honour. Coligny and his brother Andelot* accepted the challenge; two brothers were thus engaged against two brothers. The eyes of the professors were upon them—stealth was necessary. The night was chosen to cover the dark deed. An escape must be made from a window of Coligny's room; perhaps the door was kept locked by the janitor. A basket was purchased by his valet, at Coligny's order, and at the appointed hour he and Andelot let themselves down to the ground. Early in the morning the challenging brothers were at the chosen place. There was a skirmish, some blood was shed; Andelot was severely wounded; honour was supposed to be fully maintained; the Coligny brothers had unexpectedly shown themselves equal to their taller foes, who were chagrined rather than satisfied, and peace was restored. The faculty resolved to expel from college the two gentlemen from Poitou.† Coligny interceded for them in the nobleness of his disposition, but it does not appear that he prevailed. His error in duelling is not excused, even by the custom of the times, as he came to understand. We shall find him acting a nobler part under greater provocations. While condemning his fault, we admire his forgiving spirit and his magnanimity.

The education which Coligny received was intended to develop two qualities—the heroic and the graceful. The skill of a soldier and the accomplishments of a courtier were the two attainments which his uncle Montmorency chiefly valued. We meet him at the royal court at an early age, and wonder that he so bravely resists its vices.

* "Francois qu'on nomma Andelot." Courtiltz, Vie de Coligny. His estates bore the title of Andelot. He is also called D'Andelot, and Dandelot.

† Courtiltz, Vie de Coligny.

It had ruined many of the noblest young Frenchmen. It was a school of manners, of morals and of politics. The manners were licentious. The morals were a mere pretence; they were the indulgences of Romanism in its lowest state. The politics were those of Machiavel. In everything the main principle was deception. In such a whited sepulchre the air was pestilential. And yet through it some pure spirits moved. The influence of his mother was still exerted upon Coligny. She was at court, and the court was a troop of sixty or eighty ladies and a whole regiment of gentry. She was in the household of Margaret of Navarre, and, as there is reason to believe, she was the honoured governess of the little princess Jeanne D'Albret. Who knows but that she read the following letter of Margaret, showing us some of the powerful influences of truth exerted in those fiery days?—

"You ask me, my children, to do a very difficult thing —to invent a diversion that will drive away your *ennui.* I have been seeking all my life to effect this; but I have found only one remedy, which is, *reading the Holy Scriptures.* In perusing them my mind experiences its true and perfect joy; and from the pleasure of the mind proceed the repose and health of the body. If you desire me to tell you what I do to be so gay and well at my advanced age, it is because, as soon as I get up, I read these sacred books. Then I see and contemplate the will of God who sent his Son to us on earth to preach that holy word, and to announce the sweet tidings that he promises to pardon our sins and extinguish our debts, by giving us his Son, who loved us, and who suffered and died for our sakes. This idea so delights me that I take up the Psalms and sing them with my heart, and pronounce with my tongue, as humbly as possible, the fine hymns with which the Holy Spirit inspired David and the sacred authors. The pleasure I receive from this ex-

ercise so transports me that I consider all the evils that may happen me in the day to be real blessings; for I place Him in my heart by faith who endured more misery for me. Before I sup, I retire in the same manner to give my soul a congenial lesson. At night I review all that I have done in the day. I implore pardon for my faults; I thank my God for his favours; and I lie down in his love, in his fear and in his peace, free from every worldly anxiety."

Montmorency must have felt his bigotry somewhat shattered when the letters of his best friend Margaret were constantly bringing the gospel to his mind. She always called him "my nephew," and when he was on one of his marches against Charles V., she wrote: "I send you, *mon neveu*, a psalter translated into French, that the words which the king has caused his poets to record may be imprinted on your heart. I regret that it is bound in parchment, but I could not here [Valence] get a better copy. I entreat Him, by whose holy inspirations these Psalms were written, to grant that the mantle of Joshua may descend upon you, for the deliverance of these realms."*

The Reform was in its cradle, and the singing around it was glorious. This is a striking feature of that restless age. A time of song is not a time of social and moral death. When society is heaving, when party spirit runs high, when war rages, or when a political campaign keeps a nation awake, popular airs and ballads are heard everywhere. Amid the horrors of battle a soldier strikes the note and the chorus runs along the line. When the Psalms were eagerly caught up by court and crowd, they told of a deep religious movement: the break of the wave-crests show that some tremendous force is agitating the sea. What started this popular singing? A poor verse-writer

* The year 1536.

wanted his bread. Heaven would turn him to a good account, and make the enemy sing the truth into greater favour.

Coligny must have crossed the track of a poet's son, a page at court, the valet of Margaret of Navarre, the scribbler of ditties to the ladies, a genius attempting to live by his wits. He was Clement Marot. He tried the law, but gave up the study. He went with the army, but was glad to get away before the battle came. These were not his mission. The Bedists threw him into prison, on suspicion of his being a "Lutheran." His heresy was hardly so rank, and he was set free. His crime was fleshly rather than moral; he had eaten bacon in Lent. Under the shield of Margaret he travelled into Béarn, and thence he took shelter at Ferrara, at the court of the good Duchess Renée (1535). He became her secretary and laureate. It is something in favour of a man, whose worse traits have been widely heralded, that he had the patronage of two such noble princesses. Romanists have charged him with imparting the new doctrines to Madame Renée. But this only surviving child of Louis XII. had, doubtless, received the truth from Madame Soubise, or her cousin Margaret, before she left her native France. An extraordinary scholar herself, she delighted to make her court the asylum of learned men and increase the literary fame of her adopted city. The Gospel had long been in her hands; it must have touched her heart. Yet much is due to another exile just coming to her court. Marot and Calvin were there together, "the poet and the preacher of the French Reformation;" the one full of sentiment, the other strong in faith. Neither of them yet knew where he was to strike, or what he was to do in the world. Marot saw his patroness under the frown of her cruel husband, and wrote to Margaret:

Seeing her handled in this way,
Mourning the worse than darkened day,
From France she's banished, I should say,
As much as I.

O'er her poor cheek and swimming eye
I've seen the changeful colours fly,
Her tears fall fast at festal high
Into her cup.

Her spouse, who, pledged to duty near,
Should soothe the sob and dry the tear,
Causes them both. There's worse to fear,
She deems aright.

The Duke saw too many "gospellers" in his palace—Calvin, Marot, Madame Soubise and her children, besides certain Italians. He would soon banish them. But they improved their time. They met in the private parlour, read the Scriptures, prayed and confirmed each other in the faith. Among them was Renée's daughter Anne, versed in Latin and Greek, a diligent reader of the Bible, fond of theology, and able to sing with wondrous power the best hymn that Marot could write. How great her fall! She was to marry a Guise, become the most bitter foe of Coligny and one of the instigators of St. Bartholomew. That group is worthy of a full picture, a monograph. Those conversations were to report themselves in telling deeds. Marot grew brave—perhaps sincerely bold. He wrote to Francis I. a courageous letter, with a sting of rhyming truth in it—

The Sorbonnists, in their alarm,
Have thought to do a poet harm;
They and the court have said and say,
They will me as a felon slay.
Then let them one more victim seize!
Oh that it might the wise Lord please,

For his afflicted people's good,
To glut their longing for my blood,
If thus their foul abuse and deed
Were made so clear that men would heed!
Nay, five times blessed were my death,
If by the stopping of my breath
A million better lives should be
From error set for ever free!

That was saying a great deal, for martyrdom was not mere poetry in that day. A breath of Calvin had passed over those lines. These men were to part for a few years. Did the theologian give the poet a new theme for verse? Marot returned to Paris, Madame Renée having made clear the way. He studied with the eminent Francis Vatable, the king's professor of Hebrew. He turned about forty Psalms into French verse. Despite the Sorbonne, he printed them. The king was pleased. A copy was forwarded to Charles V., who sent the poet two hundred doubloons and urged him to go on. These psalms were hailed as "a great invention" made by the "prince of poets and the poet of princes." The court sang them to popular airs, for they had no other, as Protestantism had not yet composed the tunes. Each had a favourite. Catherine's was the sixth: "O Lord, in wrath rebuke me not." Henry's was, "He blessed is who fears the Lord" (128th). At a later day Charles IX. sang when hunting, "Like as the hart doth breathe and bray" (42d). The people eagerly took them from the press. They could not be printed fast enough. They crowded out the ballads and low ditties which had been so common in France. The noble in his castle sang them. The peasant among his vines delighted in the songs. The streets of cities resounded with them. The valleys were full of them, and their voice was redoubled from the mountains. A new agency was promoting the

unorganized Reform. It was the only one that could have fired the souls of men. Providence had timed it to meet the great necessity.

Marot was not safe in Paris. In his wanderings he was drawn to Geneva (1543), where Calvin gave him both welcome and work.* Beza helped to versify the entire psalmody. Goudimel and William Francke were employed to supply more solid tunes than the common airs of the day. This French hymnal became the standard in the French Reformed churches. After Genevan hands had touched it the papal gentry gradually ceased to sing the Psalms. But for years the people clung to them. Papists ridiculed; one of them set to music a French version of the Odes of Horace, but the popular contempt was his reward. Other papists were in fear lest they who made the religious songs of the nation would soon make its laws. The historian, Florimond de Remond, wrote, "The wise world, stupidly wise in this, which judges of things by the outward appearance, praised this sort of amusement, not seeing that under this chant, or rather new enchantment, a thousand pernicious novelties crept into their souls." But wits might jeer—the people sang all the louder.

Marot deserves another word. He is not claimed to have been a saint. He was the Robert Burns of his age. Yet it cannot be shown that he was a profligate. Beza says of him, "Having always been trained in a very bad school, and not being able to subject his life to the Reformation," he left Geneva. Out of this has grown a whole romance of accusations. Yet not a trace of his leading a scandalous

* "Calvin offers to engage Clement Marot to put the Psalms of David into French." Registers Council Geneva, 15th October, 1543. That year an edition of fifty Psalms was issued with a preface by Calvin. Enlarged editions appeared on to the year 1563. *Ruchat, Hist. Ref. de la Suisse.*

life is to be found on the records of Geneva. The fact is, he was not willing to be a consistent Christian. He seems to have died an exile in Piedmont. He not only gave a Psalmody to the French Protestants but he formed a new school in literature. Schlosser affirms that "he combined the pious and religious spirit of the time with that classical training which was derived from the convents and with the spirit of wantonness which sprang from the national literature." La Fontaine owes his reputation to his adoption of Marot's style. Hence his "Fables" have been read for a century.*

It was, doubtless, a copy of Marot's Psalms which Montmorency received when in camp. But he was not the man to sing them. He may have tossed the little book aside to fall into his nephew's hands. Yet he had a rigid devotion in his way. Brantome asserts that "he never missed saying his *Pater-nosters*, whether at home, on horseback, in camp or on the field. It was a common saying, 'God save us from the *Pater-nosters* of the constable.' For while he muttered them, if any disorder arose in the army he would cry out at intervals, 'Catch that fellow!' 'Hang that one on a tree!' 'Fire upon those rascals, yonder!' 'Burn such a town!' all without ceasing from his prayers. He thought it a great sin to omit them, so conscientious was he." This must have disgusted his nephews, who witnessed a purer spirit in many of those who sang their praises with sincerity.

It is important for us to know two of Coligny's young friends, who were to exert a powerful influence in shaping his career. One of them was heir to the duchy of Guise, the other was heir to the throne of France. The first would one day become his bitterest enemy, the second would open to him the golden gate of promotion.

* Bayle, Dictionnaire et Œuvres; Bungener, Calvin sa Vie, etc. Œuvres de Marot.

Some of the old historians had in their minds a picture of a man, sent forth from his father's house, lest he should take his brother's life in order to ensure to himself the duchy of Lorraine, and coming into France "with a wallet and a walking-stick," to take possession of the county of Guise as his inheritance. This man was Claude, the son of René, the powerful duke of Lorraine. He settled in Picardy in 1513, mangled the French language with his German tongue, married the Bourbon princess Antoinette, proved his valour in battle, laid schemes to make himself equal to the great barons, and claimed to be a prince of the blood on the score that he was descended from Godfrey the Crusader, who took Jerusalem, and from Charlemagne, the greatest of the old emperors, and, with about as much foundation, from Priam at Troy. "He began to grow," says a chronicler, who ridiculed his lofty pretensions, "by crouching and capping, and double diligence." Louis XII. took him into favour, and created for him a new duchy, a thing never done except for a prince of the blood. The town of Guise on the river Oise, that flowed past the birthplace of John Calvin, gave name to the new duchy and to the new house, which was to become the most fierce enemy of the Huguenots, and to provoke the civil wars and the massacres that reddened France with Christian blood. Picardy sent forth Calvin as the leader of the French Reformation, and the Guises to make war against it. The two oldest sons of this new house were Francis, the future duke of Guise, and Charles, the future cardinal of Lorraine. Both were gifted in mind, ambitious of power, crafty in their schemes, devoid of conscience, reckless of the means they employed, and determined to rule or ruin.

Francis de Guise was about two years younger than Gaspard Coligny. In youth they were "boon companions, friends and confederates at the court, wearing the same

dresses, using the same liveries, of the same parties in tournaments and combats of pleasantry, runnings at the ring and masquerades." They enjoyed each other's follies, and consulted together when they wished to be wise. Brantome further says that Guise was "prodigiously eloquent, and so was Coligny, but the latter was the more learned of the two; he understood and spoke Latin well; he had both studied and read; always reading when not engaged in affairs. Chatillon was a lord of honour, a man of goodness, sage, mature, well-advised, politic and brave; a censor and weigher of things, loving honour and virtue." This literary courtier also says that Coligny and Guise were "two diamonds of the finest water, on the superior excellence of which it is impossible to decide." Their portraits might be taken for those of two brothers; Guise the taller and more commanding; Coligny the more thoughtful and deliberate; both courteous, naturally humane and popular. The one was politic, ambitious, even crafty; the other was artless, undisguised, frank and open-hearted; his countenance was so happy that none who saw him failed to love him.* The one made religion subserve his own purposes; the other served the cause of religion with a faith that was heroic, and with aims that imparted a grandeur even to his failures. The day came when these men were the popular champions of two great parties; the name of Guise being the watchword of the Sorbonnists, and that of Chatillon the watchword of the Huguenots.

Prince Henry, the heir to the French crown, was the equal of young Guise in age, but far inferior in talent and enterprise. His little Italian wife, Catherine, more than made up the difference. He resembled Coligny in the serious cast of his mind, but he had no taste for learning; of the arts he knew nothing, and if he expressed himself

* Courtiltz, Pereau, Brantome, Vies de Coligny.

without faltering, he merited a compliment. Happy were they who won from him a smile. His friendship was more sincere and lasting than that of most princes. Slow in deciding upon a course of action, he was firm in his resolutions. He engaged in the chase and the knightly games of the age with a zest that often exposed him to danger. We imagine Coligny often attending him when he rode to his forest sports, sometimes pursuing the stag for seven restless hours, when horses fell exhausted under him, and when the admiration of the ladies was increased by their renewed astonishment at his narrow escapes.*

Prince Henry gave occasion for Coligny to make his choice of parties at the court and afterward in the kingdom. King Francis had made Montmorency the constable of France, but the haughty warrior had not become the menial of his master. The king sent Henry into Piedmont to make war for mere effect; the constable sent forward the best troops to make war in earnest and win victories. The young prince was a conqueror; he brought home a brilliant reputation, and acknowledged that he owed it to Montmorency. The king had been foiled in his policy. He threw the blame on the constable, saying to him, "You are not content to be my agent; you would be king yourself." The enmity increased: two crafty women had a hand in making it intolerable.

The devotion of Prince Henry to Diana of Poitiers is too strange for fiction, but too important to be overlooked as a fact. She was old enough to be his mother, and shrewd enough to counsel him as a son. It seems strange that she

† Civil Wars and Monarchy in France, by Leopold Ranke. Think of this hunting business, when Charles IX. used up 5000 dogs and broke the wind of all his horses, valued at 30,000 francs! Francis I. had expended 150,000 dollars, yearly, on horses, hounds, falcons and chasseurs.—*Von Raumer.*

should have the credit of rousing Henry to activity and of preventing Catherine from being divorced and sent back to Italy. She was soon in collision with the Duchess d'Etampes, and the quarrels of two bad women divided the court into two parties. Montmorency sided with Henry, and his fall was determined. Coligny followed his uncle, but maintained the honour of the neglected Catharine de Medici—a fact that she ought never to have forgotten.

Stranger still was the power of these two rival mistresses over the religious parties. Diana, very devout in the Romish way, hated the Protestants. At her word they were burned. By her minions they were plundered, and she grew immensely rich. They said of her, "For twelve years an old woman kept heaven so close that not a drop of justice fell on France, except by stealth." The bells were taxed to build her a splendid palace. The young Duchess d'Etampes was rather the medium of mercy. To her, poor victims appealed, or gospel-loving priests begged her intercessions. She whispered in the royal ear, and the cruelties were lessened. It was her policy. Sounder convictions were wrought in her soul at a later day. She inflamed the king against Montmorency.

The king vented his anger upon Montmorency on another score. He had asked the emperor for Milan, according to a late treaty. "I promised nothing of the sort," was the reply. There was no paper to show it. Still, Francis had granted Charles liberty to pass through his realm. The king's jester had written on his tablet, "The emperor Charles is more of a fool than I am, for venturing to pass through France." The king asked, "But if I promised him safety, what then?" "Then I would erase his name and insert yours." Several people had the same secret thought as this buffoon, says the Abbé Millot, but he alone had the privilege of speaking it. Charles made

his journey. But Milan was not given over to the French, and Montmorency was doomed. He now showed his utter ingratitude to his truest friend, Margaret, who had secured for him the office of constable of France. He revealed his hatred of Protestantism. Probably Diana had incited him, or had that psaltery "in parchment" offended him?

"If you really wish to root heresy out of your kingdom," said Montmorency, "you must begin at your court, and take in hand some who are your near relatives." "What?" "You must make an example of your sister Margaret."

Francis was touched: "Ah! you would send her to the stake! Never, sir. I will not have her name mentioned. She loves me too well to believe a creed which I do not believe, or which would injure the welfare of my realm." Margaret heard of this baseness. She wrote no more letters to "my nephew" (1538). It was another sign of the close line being drawn between the old popery and the new Reform.

Some time later, Margaret's daughter Jeanne, a child of thirteen, was to go through the form of a betrothal to the Duke of Cleves. She protested by words, by a vigorous pen and on oath—all in vain. The day came. The procession was marching to the church, but it was noticed that Montmorency was not in his usual place bearing the sword of state before the king. Jeanne was sinking under illness and the weight of robes and jewels. The king had intended to support his niece, but he ordered the proud constable, who had nearly all the reins of government in his hands, to take her in his arms and carry her to the altar. The courtiers were amazed at the indignity. He obeyed, but he muttered, "Adieu to my honours!" The formal ceremony of marriage was enacted, and Jeanne and Cleves separated for ever. Montmorency was soon deprived of all his offices except that of constable, which could not

be taken away. He retired to Chantilly, waiting for another king who would know him. Prince Henry saved him and the Chatillons. He loved Montmorency and held him as a counsellor. Every day letters passed between them. Coligny may have frequently been the willing messenger when absent from the field of war. In this he had the confidence of Francis of Guise. It is important to mark the friendship existing at this period between these young men, on whom so much of the future depended. The human heart is a mystery; the ardent love of to-day may be changed to the most revengeful hatred to-morrow.

"The life of M. de Chatillon," says one of his first biographers, "was so linked with that of his king that it is difficult to treat of the one without the other." On the journeys of Francis I., Coligny rides in the train; when important letters are to be carried to officers of state or the army, he is the messenger; when the people of La Rochelle are about to revolt, he bears a part in persuading them to pay their taxes and be quiet; when the siege is laid against an important town, he is seen in the trenches; and when a village is sacked by rapacious soldiers, he is conspicuous as the protector of frightened women who beg for honour and life. At the age of twenty-six he entered fully upon the profession of arms. Pages might be written upon the conspicuous part borne by him in the battle-fields of Italy, Lorraine, Flanders and Northern France. He represented that vigorous nobility which was to adopt the Reform at the moment of its saddest depression.

The first account of a wound received by Coligny almost provokes a smile. It was in the siege of Montmedi. Nothing could prevent him from running the greatest risks, for "he was eager to learn his trade, and was in the trenches every hour." A musket-ball riddled his hat, and young Guise (Prince de Joinville) asked, "Are you wounded?"

"I think I am," was the cool reply. Guise, who was "a novice in this sort of thing," was afflicted beyond measure. "It is no great matter," said Coligny; "and yet it might have been. The trade we drive ought to accustom us to death, as well as to life. The soldier should live as one who is likely to be cut down in a moment. Life is brief at most, and to die twenty years sooner or twenty years later ought to be indifferent to one who is prepared for it."* Such was the high tone of the young man in whose hands God would soon place the destinies of the Reformation.

The perils of battle had a charm for Coligny. To be denied a part in a siege was to him an adversity. When serving with Francis of Guise, then a lieutenant under the Duke of Orleans, an attack was to be made against the walls of Luxemburg.† The greater the wound the greater the honour, thought the young lord of Chatillon, expecting to take his place in the trenches. But to his grief he was summoned by Montmorency to Chantilly. He dared not disobey, "although he had all the passion in the world to be present at a siege so remarkable." He knew that his great uncle loved him as one of his own sons, but he did not suspect the object of the call was to deliver him from peril. He made a speedy journey, and found that he had been summoned on the pretext of "a family affair of the

* Perau, Brantome, Courtiltz.

† The French policy of making a new administration popular by a vigorous war had been adopted. The new ministers reversed the measures of Montmorency. They strengthened the forces against Flanders and Brabant, and sent forth three additional armies: one under the brave William du Bellay, against Milan; a second under the Duke of Orleans, against Luxemburg; and a third under Prince Henry and the new admiral, Annebaut, into Dauphiny. If the first two had failed, Montmorency would scarcely have shed tears; he especially was not anxious for the success of the Duke of Orleans, the favourite of the party which exulted in his disgrace.

last consequence." He bitterly complained of his treatment. "It was to save you from extraordinary danger," said Montmorency, whose favouritism appeared contemptible to his nephew.

"I thank you for your care of me," replied Coligny, "but still think your tenderness out of season. It hinders me from my duty to my country. I entreat you to send me back to the ranks." Pressed by these entreaties, Montmorency yielded, although he held himself in lieu of a father, and was loth to let him depart. We next find our young hero braving every danger in the siege of Bains. Wounded in the throat by a musket-ball, he was forced by his commander to retire from the scene of death. Special orders were given to the surgeon, who came with all haste, wondered that he was not dead, seemed more affrighted at the wound than the wounded man himself, and wasted time in exclamations and long-drawn sighs. His compassion was a mere emotion: it was not a motive impelling him to do quickly what was needed to save the life of a brave soldier. "These grimaces may comfort some people," said Coligny, "but for me they are not all necessary. If you wish to save your reputation, give me relief as soon as possible."

"Do you take me for an impostor?" replied the surgeon, with brutal haughtiness, and beginning to put up his instruments. "If so, I will aid those who have confidence in me." It is easy to imagine how provoking this conduct was to a man who was bleeding to death, and whom the whole army regarded as in great danger; but he was insensible to the insult, overlooking the brutality of the surgeon. He apologized, his wound was dressed, and for only ten days he kept his tent. Against the protest of his officers, he then took the field once more, and in the cavalry service won new honours.

The king admired brave men, and chose Coligny for the

work of quelling a disturbance in the south-west. The people of La Rochelle refused to pay certain taxes; the king resolved to collect them with his cavalry. When the tramp of such revenue officers was heard in the distance the city was filled with alarms. The spirit of revolt began to subside. The citizens remembered the Marshal de Chatillon, who had held important relations with them, and they sent a deputy to the son, asking him to intercede for them with the king. "Bring letters from your authorities," said Coligny. "Let us know your conditions of peace."

The messenger was returning for the letters when he fell into the hands of the advance guard and was led as a spy before the king. When questioned, he stated that he was acting under the instructions of Coligny. At this the enemies of Montmorency and his nephews were ready to cry, "Treason! Let the ambitious Chatillon be arrested. Is he a prince of the blood?" Thus early in his career was jealousy marking him as a victim.

The king, less suspicious of a plot, drew Coligny aside, and gladly learned that the young officer had acted from the noblest of motives, and that the rebels were coming to a better mind. The army advanced within a mile of the gates, and the chief citizens hurried forth with entreaties for peace. Speeches were made; terms were offered. "Speak no more of revolt," said Francis I. "Forget it all as I do. Ring all your bells, for you are pardoned. Take back the keys of your gates. I see none here but my children; in me you behold a father. My rival [the emperor Charles V.] may spill the blood of his unfortunate subjects of Ghent; it is a pleasure worthy of him. But my delight is to recover the hearts of my people."

Some blamed, others praised the king for this clemency. Coligny said to him, "You have not only secured the loyalty of the people, but you have made your fame immortal."

The young chief had won equal favour, and in the day when he would need a refuge La Rochelle would give him welcome.

News came that the army in Italy was in danger. "Send me to the front," was the urgent request of Coligny. He took the first post, followed by the host of courtiers, so that the palace was quite deserted. Andelot was among them. They all pushed on, riding down horses, breaking down coaches, and overcoming other difficulties by "the force of silver." At Cerisola the armies measured their strength. Young Enghien (a Bourbon) had the command of the French. He saw the Spaniards cutting to pieces his central column. He had brought on the battle contrary to the king's order. How bitter would be defeat and reproach! He placed his sword so that he might fall upon it and die. But just then some straggling horsemen told him that there was victory along the line. The Spanish commander had fled. The result was largely due to Coligny and his brother. They and other young heroes were knighted on the field. After farther service, Coligny returned to Paris with the rank of colonel.

The garrison at Boulogne must be relieved. Young cavaliers went sweeping on to the straits of Dover. They looked for the French signal on the walls; they saw the English flag. The governor of the town had struck his colours and let in the enemy. A few movements, a raking fire, a bold charge, the crashing down of a gate and a small man was riding into the lower part of the town at the head of the best drilled regiment in France. He was Coligny, shouting, "On, now, to the heights. Drive out the English. The darkness will help us." The higher officers opposed: "It is too dark. Friend cannot be told from foe." Their counsel prevailed after Coligny had put more than six hundred men into the place. Winter was coming, and he was

left to maintain the siege. In one engagement young Guise was struck in the face with a lance which passed through from one side to the other. Coligny was in distress. He brought in Ambrose Paré, "the father of French surgery," who was then a student of the Bible. The lance was drawn from the head of Guise in a way that makes one shudder to read of it. It was like tearing up a small tree by the roots, and performed in a manner quite similar. Yet the hero scarcely groaned. His recovery seemed a miracle, adding to the fame of Paré. The warrior gained the title of *Le Balafre*—the scar-covered.

Pending the siege the peace of Crespy was signed (1544), between King Francis and the Emperor Charles. The long wars were to cease, but the work of bloodshedding was to take another form. The pope had been anxious for peace, so that these great monarchs might employ the vigour of their last days against the Protestants. They secretly engaged to destroy "heresy" in their respective dominions—an agreement not to be forgotten.

Papal writers never weary of repeating that Francis I. gently treated the Reform in its infancy. "It was his fate," says one, "to befriend the enemies of religion." True, he favoured the Renaissance. He invited scholars to Paris. He begged Melancthon to come. He maintained learned professors in the colleges. But yet he drove away scholars who advocated the new doctrines. It has been said, "Had Lutheranism made its way into France, as it had in England, it might have been tolerated; but Calvinism roused at once the king, the court, the prelates, nobles and legists."* We do not believe a word of it. Our proof is that hundreds of men were sent to the stake under the name of "Lutherans." Indeed, the fires were kept burning for those who held a still milder form of doctrine—those

* Crowe, History of France; Froude, *passim.*

who followed the queen of Navarre, and whose motto was, "A reform in the Roman Church, and not a new Church outside of the old pale." It was the very *fact* of heresy, and not the mere *form* of it, that lay heavy on the royal heart. Not a man, woman or child was safe when a Bible was found in the house.

Francis had a pride in his colleges. But mark the report of the Venetian envoy Cavalli:* "The university may number some twelve thousand or sixteen thousand scholars, of whom, however, many live in poverty. The salaries of the professors are very small and their duties very extensive; yet they crowd to Paris, because of the honour of teaching there. The professors of the Sorbonne have the unlimited right of chastising heretics, and cause them to be burnt alive, little by little." And on these burnings Francis gazed with the utmost composure!

Nor was it enough that four thousand people should die by private martyrdoms during his reign. There must be a wholesale devastation. When Francis was thought to be dying, Cardinal Tournon said to him, "Your sufferings are a judgment from God; you must propitiate Heaven by destroying the heretics." The word went forth. "Thick grass is more easily mown than thin," was the pithy saying of Alaric, and this policy led Francis to choose the Waldenses of Dauphiny for an example. The brigands, under Oppide, were let loose upon the towns and villages. None were spared. Even papists were slaughtered for living quietly among Protestants.

One poor idiot, amid the sacking, burning and butchery at Merindol, held out his hand to a soldier and said, "These two crowns for my life." He alone was left. Oppide heard of it, arrested the idiot and had him shot, saying, "I know how to treat these people. I will send them, children and

* A. D. 1547, Von Raumer, Orig. Doc.

all, to live in hell!" Other towns were thus stricken from the map of France. A witness wrote, "I saw in one church between four and five hundred poor women and children butchered." A barn filled with refugees was burned. Some fled into caves; they were suffocated by the smoke of fires kindled at the entrances. Twenty-two towns and villages were utterly destroyed, and the silence of desolation has long hung over a district that once resounded with the songs of harmless shepherds and the ring of cheerful industry.*

All this, and much more, ten years before there was any organic "Calvinism" in France. The heresy was called by other names, however erroneous the terms. A sweeping edict went forth against the so-called "Lutherans" in the south-west. Calvin was intensely at work, but the persecuted were not recognized as his followers. It was not, then, his name, his system, his organism or his spirit that "provoked the edicts of persecution." Even before he forsook the Roman Church there was the same fiery diligence employed against free thought and pure worship.

True, there was a "Calvinism" in France, but it was secret. It passed under other names. It wanted consolidation, a form, a church, a discipline. Its adherents generally clung to the papal organization. They were new vines in the old vineyards, waiting to be transplanted. They met in secret. If a minister ventured among them, he must be kept hidden. They could not depend upon the ministrations of the papal clergy, except the few who were braving death and feeding the flock with the truth. "Many of the priests are so ignorant," says a chronicler, "that they can neither read nor write; so lazy, that they have left off preaching altogether. They spend most of the day in taverns, drinking and gambling." What they did at night

* De Thou, Mezeray, Capefigue.

is too abominable for our pages. Many in these flocks sought greener pastures. "They assembled in fields, gardens, barns, no matter where. . . . Their preachers were butchers, bricklayers, publicans, and other venerable doctors of that sort," is the satiric description of an old writer. But the night was the time usually chosen for their meetings. Then the labourers had leisure, and the darkness was their shield. Great mystery was used in giving the summons; a boy went whistling through the streets, or a man carried a lantern of peculiar shape, or a thread hung from a window. They crept to the place, with muffled voices sang their psalms, and then gave heed to the Scriptures.

In higher quarters the same caution must be used. Among the secret believers at court was the mother of Coligny. She saw her sons giving promise of distinction. When dying, in 1547, she refused the presence of a Romish priest, saying, "God has given me the grace of fearing and loving him; in his hands I am safe." Often were the Psalmist's words on her lips, when she thought of her fatherless sons; "His mercy is from generation to generation unto them that fear him"—a hope not entertained in vain.*

* Vita Colinii.

CHAPTER II.

PROMOTIONS AND PROJECTS.

(1547--1556.)

WHEN the young Duke of Orleans was dying, and foes were threatening the kingdom, Francis I. walked to the window and cried, "O my God; thou hast already smitten me in diminishing my power, and now thou takest away my son. What remains but that thou shouldst destroy me altogether?" Once more he turned from indulgence to devotion; again he recognized the hand of God. It was a specimen of the sort of fitful piety then prevailing among the royal favourites. His son was laid in the tomb, and from that day the king was of a sad countenance. A fever was consuming his life. By rapid changes of abode, he sought rest, but found it not. Coligny was one of his faithful attendants.

Beseiged by courtesans and priests, the king was dying at Rambouillet in 1547, at the age of fifty-two years. Feeble was the regret of the Romanists, who reproached him for not having done enough for the Church, and thought that he had erred in attempting to make himself "the father of letters;" still less was the regret of the Protestants,*

* The use of the term *Protestants* is of a later date in France, where, indeed, it never became popular. A succession of terms was employed—*Lutherans, Sacramentarians, Christaudins,* then *Calvinists, Huguenots, Religionaries, Those of the Religion.* They called themselves *Gospellers, The Faithful, The Reformed.* They were not strictly the followers of Luther, but of Lefevre, Farel and Calvin.

whom he had sometimes treated with mildness, and sometimes persecuted with severity. The Dauphin Henry came to his side, to hear his father's last advice, but not in a spirit to follow it. The dying counsels were to this effect: "Do not recall Montmorency; allow him to hold no office in the state. Retain my ministers, Cardinal Tournon* and Admiral Annebaut. Check the ambition of the Guises. Reduce the taxes. Make your reign popular. Above all, do not favour Montmorency; never, never recall Montmorency."

Never was breath more vainly spent. As soon as the king was dead, Henry proceeded to give no heed whatever to his father's instructions. He dismissed most of the officers of state. Calling to him his valiant young friend Coligny, he ordered him to send for his uncle. Andelot rode post-haste with the message. Another account is, that Henry sent a different courier, but Coligny, anxious to bear the glad tidings, mounted his horse and was the first to reach Chantilly.† Montmorency shed tears of grief at the tidings of his master's death, and then retired to offer prayers for the repose of his soul. It was characteristic of the veteran warrior to be strict in the services of his devotion. Then mounting a swift horse, he rode with all speed to the palace of St. Germain, where Henry had appointed to meet him. For two hours they were closeted together,

* About ten years previous Calvin had written the famous dedication of his *Institutes* to Francis I. It was one of the most powerful pleas for toleration ever penned. Cardinal Tournon told the king that such a letter was an outrage on his majesty and on the religion of his fathers. It was he who instigated the fierce persecutions against the Reformed. To pray in the French language was declared a crime, and to converse in secret a cause for arrest, by this favourite minister of state.

† Perau, Vie de Coligny.

and they arranged their plans. The new king paid him every honour and reinstated him in all his former offices. Again was the constable made grand-master of the palace, minister of finance and chief counsellor. Not content with such public marks of affection, Henry insisted upon paying him all the salaries which were due from his lost offices, but Montmorency replied: "Sir, it is not just that I should receive rewards, when I have as yet performed for you no labour. All I ask is a loan equal to two years' service." Still Henry persisted, and paid to the constable one hundred thousand golden crowns. What could have rendered Coligny's prospects more bright than the restoration of his uncle and the friendship of his king? And who was the actual king but Montmorency? The sentiments of Henry toward this imperious baron were those of a scholar who looks upon his master with awe. The school of politics was in a turbulent state; a strong hand was needed to bring order out of the chaos which gallantry, rivalry and selfishness had produced. The young monarch threw the burden upon Montmorency, and at his frown the court trembled. In the cabinet there was a riddance of that craftiness whose object was to bring France under the power of Rome and of Spain. Whatever the faults of the constable, he had the virtue of patriotism. He was a true Frenchman. The women's faction was broken up, by giving Diana full sweep and sending the Duchess d'Etampes into seclusion, where she seems to have repented of her sins and adopted the teachings of Calvin. She had used her great influence over Francis I. to win favour for the Protestants. She was permitted to "profess the Reformed religion" in her own house publicly.* Her sister, Madame de Cany, became an ornament of the Reformation.† The whole troop of ladies

* Vie de Coligny.

† Calvin's Letters, ccxxxii., ccxl., ccxcii., cccxix., etc.

would have been banished if Henry had not opposed. The crowd of prelates at the court was reduced. Only five of the twelve cardinals were retained, Odet of Chatillon being one of them. It was the fashion of the times to adopt classic models: that of young Guise was Scipio; that of Montmorency was Cato the Censor. In two respects his imitation was no failure: he was rude in his censures upon everybody; he was so avaricious that a generous impulse would have amazed his friends. Coligny was not likely to err from want of severe correction, nor to be ruined by a surplus of spending-money; not so long as his uncle took the oversight of his morals and his revenues.

The recall of Montmorency has been regarded as an unwise and unfortunate policy. Varillas declares, "If Henry II. had not restored the Constable Montmorency, he had not been obliged, in order to retrieve himself, to give up one hundred and ninety-eight towns or fortresses, and almost as much country as would make one-third of France."* But there is another side of the case. There is something more valuable than fortresses and territory: it is national independence; it is freedom from a foreign yoke; it is the averting of a religious despotism. France might afford to yield up some towns to get rid of a Cardinal Tournon and the agents of the emperor. True, Rome and Spain would send others to weave their nets, but one crisis was past when Montmorency became master. The Spanish Inquisition was not then introduced into France.

And yet the haughty baron was far from being a reformer. The funeral of the late king was delayed almost a month, and he thought all the pomp of burial worthy of the man who had made heresy a crime and a terror. He must have shaken his head at hearing the eulogy of the bishop of Maçon, in his funeral oration: "After so holy a life," said

* Varillas, Hist. du Règne de Henri II.

the preacher (and what unmeant irony!), "the soul of the king was at once transplanted to heaven, without passing through the flames of purgatory."

The doctors of the Sorbonne were astounded. "He is a secret heretic," they exclaimed. "He denies purgatory." They went to Saint Germain to make their complaint in the royal ear. Henry was absent, but the master of the palace listened to them, and said with all courtesy, "Be calm, messieurs; if you had known the late king, my master, as well as I did, you would have got the sense of the bishop's words. He meant that if the king had made a journey to purgatory, he was too restless to remain there long."* The doctors were quite unmanned. They were obliged to cease from the inquiry. Both the flatterer and the jester reveal the shallowness of the religious convictions then prevalent.

Nor had the royal son much deeper thoughts. Only a few weeks passed before he allowed a great duel, or prize-fight, to come off for the entertainment of the court and populace. On high seats sat the nobles; the balconies were filled with ladies. The great captains gazed upon the barbarous combat. At every blow shouts arose and trumpets sounded. But there was one young man who had no heart for the brutal amusement. He was silent, calm, thoughtful. He was Coligny. We are astonished to see in that court one man who meditates! Had he plans more wise or thoughts more ambitious? We know not the depths of his solemn mind.†

It is not a crime to be impartial. It is not our claim that the young Coligny was entirely free from all the sins amid which he lived, and whose presence he could not flee. The age was one of lax habits; the court was a whirlpool

* Thuani, Historia.

† Lacratelle, Guerres de Religion.

of licentiousness. But many writers who charge him with heresy and rebellion represent his youth as a model of purity. They find nothing to expose, nor need we seek it. We simply admit that he may have been involved in some of the follies of his companions. Yet in this period of his life he was silent while most of them were boisterous, serious while they dissipated, wise while they played the fool exceedingly, and careful to observe the rites of his Church while they preferred the gallantries of the court. Often did he say to his brothers, "We are prosperous beyond our deserts; how strange it is that Heaven should so highly favour us!"

It is important to notice the means by which the Reformed doctrines were made known to the Chatillon brothers. While still in his disgrace at Chantilly, Montmorency had in view their good fortune, and he had a little private advice for Gaspard's ear. "Think," said he, "of Claudine de Rieux, countess of Laval and Montfort. She has admirable graces, high birth and immense estates. A noble alliance is a promotion." Perhaps Coligny was already thinking of some one else.

"I thank you for your good-will," replied Coligny, after taking his usual time to consider an important affair, "but I prefer that my brother Andelot should give his thoughts to the subject. It will better suit him."

"What! is my advice to be thrown away, when I seek your highest welfare?" The uncle was angry at his very cool nephew. Not long after he sounded the younger brother. "Give me a quarter of an hour," said Andelot, and he hastened to get the opinion of Gaspard. Not all brothers could manage an affair of rivalry so happily. The younger accepted the situation, and the marriage was celebrated in the year 1547. It was blessed of Heaven.

There were yet other attractions in the noble house of the

Lavals. Charlotte, a very near relative of Claudine, was also the daughter of a count. Beauty and accomplishments were among her lesser graces. Her wealth was not in estates, but in Christian character. It appears that she was already devoted to the new doctrines, having learned them, probably, from Margaret of Navarre. She had other suitors—two or three princes of the blood; but Coligny began to think in a way that soothed his uncle's resentment, and the decision to which he came is shown by the record, made many years later, in his own handwriting upon a leaf in the prayer-book of his daughter Louisa:* "The xvith day of October, 1547, Gaspard de Coligny, seigneur of Chatillon, and since admiral of France, was married at Fontainebleau, in first marriage, to Charlotte de Laval." Perhaps the influence of no wife upon her husband was ever attended with greater results, personal, social, ecclesiastic and national. Of this the evidence awaits the reader.

Montmorency was appeased. He was again ready to whisper the name of his nephews in the royal ear. Coligny was one day summoned before the king, who said, "For your bravery everywhere, your superior discipline and your meritorious services at Cerisola and Boulogne, I confer upon you another rank of knighthood. I give you the collar of my order—that of St. Michael."

A mere courtier would have been elated with an honour so highly esteemed in that day. But Coligny was more pleased when the king said to him shortly afterward, "I appoint you colonel-general of the French infantry," an office so recently created that he seems to have been the second who held it.

Glad to exchange the court for the camp, Coligny was soon at his post in the field, where he gained the reputation of being the best young officer in the army. His stern

* Afterward the wife of William the Silent, Prince of Orange.

sense of duty, his humanity and invincible courage were in striking contrast to the gay, frivolous and even cruel disposition of the young nobles of his times.

The ranks of soldiers were largely filled by foreign mercenaries, who cared less for victory than for plunder and rioting. The Swiss could always be hired by whatever party offered them most. They were idle, profane and dissipated in camp; when in active service they roamed as brigands on their marches. Coligny had made a study of military discipline, and had formed a system of rules, which he resolved to test by practice. "Having written out many rules which he thought necessary both for the service of God and of his king, he showed them to the prince (Henry II.), so that he might adopt and publish them to the whole army. The most excellent of them, in my opinion, was one for the defence of God's name from profanation. The love of wine and of evil associates reigned equally among them; they thought it an ornament of their discourse to take the name of God in vain. 'You make your courage consist in swearing,' he said to them. 'It is a wicked boldness. It does not become a man of war.'"* The Chevalier Bayard had made a similar rule for his soldiers.

"He would make himself a little general," said certain of them whom he had rebuked for sleeping through the dawn, and even until midday.

"It should be the custom of the soldier to rise with his colonel," he replied. Early rising was not one of his nat-

* Courtiltz, Vie de Coligny, Brantome. As a specimen, we quote the severe rule on profanity: "Et, par exprès et sur toutes choses, defendu à tous soldats de ne jurer, dorènavant, de blasphèmes énormes et exécrables, sur peine, la première foys, de tenir prison huit jours durant au pain et à l'eau; la seconde, faire amende honorable publiquement, en chemise et à genoux, un torche allumé au poing." *Puaux, Hist. de la Ref. France, II.*

5 *

ural traits. Berault had taken great pains to cure his fondness for sleep, and it had clung to him after he entered the army. When passing whole nights on his horse he almost shrank from the hardship, sometimes wishing that he had taken the part which his brother Odet had chosen. To inure himself he had ordered his valet to wake him at various hours as he rested in camp. Now his habit was formed, and he made it a law in his regiment. He had a fixed hour for rising in the morning, whether in camp or on the march to battle; one object was that he might have time for his devotions. "The first thing he did on leaving his couch was to kneel before a crucifix and spend a quarter of an hour in prayer. In this he would allow nothing to interrupt him, for he believed that God would not favour those who forgot him. Then he dressed himself and attended to his horses, to which he exhibited great kindness. An excellent horseman and fond of riding, he then spent an hour in this exercise, when the day was to be one of rest. Much of his leisure he spent in reading, and few men were better versed in history. While a Roman Catholic he attended mass, the chief service of his Church in that age. He was moved less by a desire to please the king than to please God. He had a delicacy of religious sentiment rare in his time, and especially at the court. He lived much as one who had renounced the world, and who never forgot that he must die."*

His rules extended to the minute points of the drill, the march, the siege, the battle, the care of the dead and the treatment of an enemy. When first introduced there were some soldiers who were disposed to test his firmness in adhering to them. They violated them. In order to show that his penalties were not empty threats, he began to make an example of the worse offenders. Among them was one

* Courtiltz, Vie de Coligny.

who belonged to the town of Chatillon, and his cousin was master of Coligny's house or castle. "Spare him," entreated the master, who had come to the relief of his relative; "he is my cousin."

"For that very reason he shall have less grace than the others," replied Coligny. "He knows me and my discipline better than they do. If you imagine that relationship is an excuse for crime, and if you plead for him only on this ground, you will not be kept in my service a quarter of an hour longer." The penalty was inflicted; the result was a general reformation of manners.*

"He has a little court about him, as if he were a great general," said some of the envious. "He simply cultivates the friendship of his fellow-officers," replied those who understood the matter. The fact was, he drew them to him by the attractions of his character, his artlessness, his frankness, his unassuming conduct, and even by his strictness of discipline. He was training his men into a legion that would start to their feet at his call, follow him on the most tedious march, rush furiously to the charge at his command, and make their presence an assurance of victory. Whenever desperate work was to be done the cry was, "Give us Coligny's regiment!" He was the Havelock of his age.

His regimental rules were so effective that they gained him favour among the common people, who sought relief from pillage and insult. They were adopted as a part of the military code. Brantome wrote at a later day: "It was he who regulated the French infantry by those fine rules that we still have of his, and which are printed, practiced, read and published among our bands. Captains and others, even of the contrary party, when any difficulty of war arose, would say, 'In this we must be guided by the rules and regulations of monsieur the admiral.' They

* Brantome, Courtiltz.

were right; they were the most elegant and the wisest that ever were made in France, and I believe they have preserved the lives of millions of persons, to say nothing of their goods and property. For, before, it was nothing but pillage, brigandage, murders, quarrels and brutality, so that the troops resembled hordes of wild Arabs, rather than noble soldiers.* This, then, is the obligation the world owes to this eminent person."

He is said to have been the first to plan a hospital for the French army. In truth, he was devoted to human improvement in all its forms. Ranké, speaking of his discipline in the army, adds: "With the same determination, he cared for the condition of his troops. He compelled the enemy to carry on the war according to the law of nations by the most impartial reprisals, and was almost terrible in his conduct toward the peasantry who laid hands on his soldiers." The cottager found in him a protector and the warrior a defender. It is not therefore surprising that he was exceedingly popular among the citizens, who were saved from violence, and the soldiers, who were kept from insult. A man who thus protects the rights of all parties is above the selfishness of the demagogue, and ought to be defended from the shafts of all accusers.

The king, "taking a great liking to him," entrusted him with the military command of Picardy, and, not long afterward, with that of the Isle de France. In the one lay Boulogne, in the other Paris. He soon was made a member of the state and privy council.

* "The peasants hardly deigned to shut the doors of their cellars and granaries against the soldiers, who behaved most becomingly. When quartered in the villages they did not venture to take a pullet without asking leave and paying for it."—*Claude Haton,* whose Chronicle is one of the valuable Documents sur l'Histoire de France. (Consulted in the Boston Athenæum.)

The northern coast required attention. In a treaty which gave the English the right to hold Boulogne for eight years it was agreed that no new fortifications should be built. But the French saw a strong embankment growing rapidly out into the sea, and knew it was not a result of nature. One day two French officers came near the workmen and said, "Your fort advances apace."

"No fort," replied Lord Grey and his comrades; "it is a jetty to amend the haven, to save both your ships and ours."

"Yea, but you intend to place ordnance upon it."

"To what end? Whereunto should we shoot?"

"Well, seeing it is no fort, you may do what you will; but if it was a fortress, we neither might nor would in any case endure it." The parties then began to talk about the Protestants, who were shaking the world.

The work went on. Coligny, who had heard his king say, "I will recover Boulogne or lose my realm for it," and who thought that his own plans might have secured it if they had been adopted, was ordered to checkmate the English. Choosing the high ground, he raised a singular kind of fort, near enough to command the town and harbour. So ingeniously was it constructed that for a century after it bore the name of Chatillon, from its contriver. While his soldiers were securing the corn and cattle of the region, his guns prevented the enemy from obtaining supplies of bread by sea, and even fuel from the shores. This fort gave such advantage to the besiegers, that Sir Paget wrote to London, saying of the French: "They will have Boulogne, they say, by fair means or foul. . . . Rochefort [maternal uncle of Coligny] braggeth that their king is not a King John, but a French king, such as conquered Rome, and been feared of the rest; and he telleth us how we are in poverty and mutinies at home, beset all about with ene-

mies. . . . It is good to consider whether it be better to let them have Boulogne again, and to live in peace."*

The Frenchman was not bragging without reason. He had another nephew besetting England upon the northern side. Andelot had been appointed inspector-general of infantry and sent to Scotland, along with other officers. He was helping to solve the question whether Mary Stuart should become the wife of Edward VI. or of Francis II. The Scots said that they did not dislike the match with Edward, but hated the manner of wooing. The French were more artful. While their soldiers were driving and burning the English out of Eastern Scotland, they slyly sent a fleet from Leith, on the pretence of going to France, but in fact running round the Orkneys, entering the Clyde and capturing the young princess in the castle of Dumbarton, not against her will, for her mother was a Guise. The child of six years, the valued prize, was taken on board the royal galley. The fleet lay for some time off the coast, and Lady Fleming asked that Mary might seek a little rest on shore.

"No," replied the captain, Villegagnon—of whom more on other pages—"she shall not go on land, but to France, or else drown by the way." August winds bore her into the harbour of Brest, whence she was taken to the palace of St. Germain.† What an eventful life was in reserve for Mary of Scots! "So," wrote John Knox, "she was sold to go into France, to the end that in her youth she should drink of that liquor that should remain with her all her lifetime—a plague to the realm, and for her own final destruction."‡

* Vita Colinii; Burnet, Hist. Ref.; Froude, Hist. of England, vol. v.

† Perau, Vie d'Andelot; Vie de Pierre Strozzi; Tytler, Hist. of Scotland, vol. vi; Froude, Hist. of England. vol. v.

‡ Knox, Hist. of Reformation.

This diversion gave Coligny still greater advantage at Boulogne; for it placed England between two fires. All parties agreed to a treaty, whose terms, on the French side, were arranged by Coligny and his uncle Rochefort, greatly to the advantage of France.

New troubles arose in Italy. Andelot was one of the brave captains sent to maintain the old claims upon Milan, for which his grandfather had battled. In this war he was to gain spiritual liberty. When foraging near Parma, and burdened with plunder, his troops fell into an ambuscade, and, after a rough fight, he was taken prisoner and carried off to Milan. There he was to remain while five years should wear away and fierce wars rage throughout Europe.

In his prison he asked for books, and we have some hints of the way in which he obtained certain writings of John Calvin and other Reformers.

There was one princess ever ready to help any Frenchman who came to distress in Italy. She was Renée, Duchess of Ferrara. She often said that if the old Salic law had not denied to a daughter the right of royal succession, she would have ruled over France. Happy for that land if she had worn the crown! Then no Medici, no Charles IX., none of that brood on the throne! Her daughter, Anne, had married Francis of Guise, and yet that ambitious house could not tempt her from the path of simple, earnest piety. When her son-in-law was called to the siege of Calais, leaving a shattered army to the mercy of the emperor, she had the credit of saving ten thousand of them from death. "As they passed through Ferrara," says Brantome, "she did her utmost to supply them with money and medicines."

"You will bring yourself to poverty," said her chiding steward, who was coming to the end of his purse. "What of that?" was her reply. "These are poor Frenchmen,

and my countrymen, and, if God had made me a man, they would all have been my subjects; indeed they would be now if that unjust Salic law did not bear so hard upon me."*

How did she hear of Andelot in prison? Through the French court, or by letters from his wife, or himself? Perhaps by all these modes. It seems that she and her friends secretly conveyed books to him, and that at the very time when she was annoyed by the spying Jesuits and under the ban of the duke and the pope. His guards did not have a close eye upon the packages which slipped through their hands. He opened them. What heresies! Yet, having nothing else to do, he read the writings of Calvin with curiosity, then interest, then conviction.† "And it was there," says Brantome, "he learned his fine religion, for, having naught else to do, he set himself to reading, and had all sorts of books brought to him—for the Inquisition was not so tight then as it has been since—and there he learned the new religion, though, indeed, he had got a first scent of it during the Protestant wars in Germany [and Scotland]. Such are the sad fruits of leisure and idleness!" He concludes, pathetically: "So many evil things does she teach us, of which we have cause ever afterward to repent." The gossipping chronicler had very little religion of any sort to trouble him with repentance.

Andelot is said to have written letters to his brothers, advising them to get and read the same books. But he must first prove that he had a steadfast faith, and there must be another captivity, before his advice would take effect. In turning the key for his release his brother Gaspard was to have a hand.

* Œuvres de Clement Marot; Bayle; Memorials of the Duchess Renée, London, 1859.

† Perau, Vie de Seigneur d'Andelot.

It would be delightful to believe that Henry II. did not breathe threatening and slaughter against "those of the new way" in religion. But the proofs of his violence are found throughout the whole twelve years of his reign. He sought to complete the terrible work, which his father had begun, against the Waldenses and their brethren in the southern provinces of France. Hamlets and towns were swept out of existence. Even in Paris the burning-places were kept ready for new victims.

When Henry and Catharine returned from the coronation at Rheims—July 26, 1547—the tournaments did not satisfy their partisans. They wished a baptism of blood on the joyous occasion. The royal consent was easily obtained. There was no lack of heretics in the prisons. Four poor, brave Christaudins were chosen for the stake. One of them was a tailor, thrown into prison for having worked on a holiday and spoken some ill words against the Church of Rome. It appears that he had been in the king's service. "Let me question some of the heretics," said Henry; "it will be a pastime."

"Bring in the tailor," was the order of the Cardinal of Lorraine. "The fellow will not be able to utter a sensible word. It will be amusing to us all." The poor man was brought; he stood before the court with great presence of mind. He proved too well versed in Scripture for the king to manage. He put the priests to silence. He perplexed a bishop who was present. He dispelled their hope of amusement at his expense. Diana of Poitiers undertook to silence him with her raillery, but, says Crespin, "the sempster soon cut her cloth in a different fashion to that she expected; for, not being able to endure such inordinate arrogance in her, whom he knew to be the cause of such cruel persecutions, he said to her: 'Rest contented, madame, that you have infected all France, without mixing

your own venom and filth in so sacred and holy a thing as the religion and truth of our Lord Jesus Christ.' She cringed."

"Let him be burned alive," exclaimed the angered king. The order was gratifying to the agents of cruelty. The stake was fixed in front of the palace. Henry stood in his window and gazed upon the victim, who cast upon him such a look of calm rebuke that he retired, frightened lest the judgment of God should fall upon him. That look, that mute but terrible accusation, followed him wherever he went. For many a night he seemed to behold the image of the dying man. He swore never to be present again at such horrible scenes, and he almost kept his word. A more Christian king would have put an end to them. But the savage work went on, in the hope of terrifying the people. The result was an increase of believers in the Gospel. Crowds came to see men die for their faith; they went home to mourn and muse. The humane were shocked; they gave their sympathies to the resistless martyrs; they admired the heroism of faith; they inquired what it was that made others so ready to die and so triumphant in the awful conflict. The very ashes of the Place de Grève were seed sown for the measureless harvest of God.

And yet the king seemed to have two hands, two sets of principles, opposed to each other. The interests of the Church must yield to those of the State. It was the rule of kingcraft. The policies of war were framed by no law. Maurice of Saxony roused the German Protestants against the emperor Charles V. and led them to war, appealing to Henry II. to render him aid. The French king could not in honour refuse. If he did, it would be charged that he was afraid of the great enemy who sought to make all Europe his empire. Henry called together his councillors. "We must assist the Protestants of Germany," was the

purport of one breath. "We must crush out Protestantism in France," was the purport of the next. With one hand he was about to strike a severe blow at the papacy, and with the other attempt to soothe the wound. Luther would have good cause to rejoice in the aid rendered to German liberty; Calvin must lament the oppression under which his French followers were groaning. It is a singular circumstance that the Reformation in Germany should owe a debt of gratitude to a king who persecuted his own subjects at home with all the fierceness of bigotry.* Coligny served in the campaign as an officer of high rank, paving the way for still higher promotion.

By the wiles of Montmorency and by the soldiers' courage France was regaining her lost towns. Charles V. took up his march with a most fearful train of artillery, saying, "I will take Metz, or perish in the attempt." Couriers came to Henry with the alarming news. As Coligny was now the acting admiral, having an eye equally upon the cavalry and the infantry, he expected to be ordered to the work of defence. But the commission was given to Francis of Guise.

The time had been when Coligny would have rejoiced in the advancement of his young comrade. But Guise had begun to reveal his jealousy and ambition; he had muttered his displeasure when Coligny was promoted; he had been born with a hatred to the house of Montmorency in his heart, and, as the iron blood of Guise had but recently become golden, he affected a contempt for the nobler and more ancient house of Chatillon. With a drop of Bourbon in his veins he coveted the title of a prince of the blood. Might he not possibly be, one day, king of France? and his brother Charles, the cardinal, pope in Rome? It was a mystery to Coligny that Francis Guise should be chosen

* Perau, Vie de Coligny; Sleidan; Thuanus.

for the defence. "What is my ambitious will?" thought he; "there is a Providence."

The choice was made. Guise went to Metz. He almost destroyed the city in preparing to defend it. Churches and convents were levelled to make a battle-field. The little band of Protestants there had no mercy shown them.* He aided in throwing up breastworks with his own hands. He won the applause of the soldiers and the praises of the citizens, who hoped to resist the emperor's hundred thousand men. At length the enemy opened fire; some of the walls were broken; the awful charge was made, and met as Charles had not expected. The tide of battle was rolled back, and the emperor retired to his quarters, complaining that he was deserted by his troops, who acted as cowards and no longer deserved the name of men. Rain and snow had their effect upon the besiegers. The old emperor was foiled by the young duke, and he resolved to retreat, saying, "I now perceive that Fortune chooses to confer her favours upon young suitors, scorning those who are advanced in

* William Farel, the pastor at Neufchâtel, had come to preach a short time at Metz, but was obliged to desist. He retired to the neighbouring town of Gorze, where he would be protected by Count William of Furstenberg. In spite of the attacks of furious women, he preached with success. Many Protestants from Metz came to hear him. This enraged the Romanists of that city, and they laid a plot to massacre him and his hearers. The Duke of Guise sent a company of soldiers to fall upon the congregation. Three hundred of these innocent people were celebrating the Lord's Supper. The service had scarcely closed when they heard the trumpet; the band of soldiers fell upon them, put some to the sword and drove others into the river, where they were drowned. Farel was wounded. He and Count William barely got into the castle. Even there, Farel was not safe, and he was put into a wagon with some wounded men and sent to Strasburg. This was one of the first of Guise's butcheries. The French king refused to bring the murderers to justice.—*Kirchhofer, Leben Farels.*

years." All France rang with the fame of the Duke of Guise.

Another young man was waiting to give the emperor a rebuff. Coligny, having been sent toward Flanders, repelled him from Doullens, and faced him again at Renty, where both parties claimed the victory. It was necessary, however, for Charles to retreat, and but for the excellence of his horse, Coligny might have had the great monarch as a prisoner. But history does not consist in what might have been, and we will not speculate. The long campaign had its end, and soldiers went home to tell at their firesides how Coligny applied his severe rules; how he went into battle with a prayer and came out with a thanksgiving; how he often restrained the troops from pillage and from outrages upon the citizens; and how, when his uncle ordered the sack of a Flemish town and gave him the booty, he divided it among the soldiers. He was now fully confirmed as the admiral of France. He had command of the entire sea-coast and the border fortresses. "The admiral of France was rather a titular than an executive officer, and more generally, as Coligny, employed in military than naval service."†

Admiral Coligny was mainly entrusted with the forming of several treaties, one of which created more noise "in the breach than in the observance." It was a "treaty of truce," brought about on this wise. Charles V., the emperor, was preparing to abdicate, but he wished to smooth the path for his son Philip, and strew it with flowers of peace. Commissioners from him and Henry II. were labouring to get the advantage of each other, and thus secure an exchange of prisoners. They were entertained by the monks in the Abbey of Vaucelles, near Cambray. If the parties at war could exchange prisoners, why could they not make a truce,

* Ranken, History of France, Bk. vi., ch. v.

and prevent any more soldiers from being captured or killed? They agreed upon a truce for five years. Count Lalain came to Blois to get the signature of Henry. Admiral Coligny was sent to Brussels to be present when Charles and Philip should bind themselves by oath to keep the peace. As for the pope, he must make the best of it, however much he desired to see the war prolonged. He was anxious to drive the Spaniards out of Italy, and Henry II. had sworn to aid him in the expulsion, but the truce of Vaucelles cut off the hope of French assistance.

Coligny took his journey into the land where William the Silent was soon to lay the foundations of the Dutch Republic. These two most remarkable men had just been leading armies against each other on the frontier. Did they meet at the court in Brussels? If so, they did little more than study one another. Each was too cautious and silent a man to invite an acquaintance under such circumstances. Coligny was ushered into the presence of Philip, and one of his attendants reported to his royal master "an instance of Philip's unpoliteness." The apartment was hung with tapestry, which represented the battle of Pavia, the manner in which Francis I. was taken prisoner by Charles V., his painful voyage to Spain, and all the most mortifying incidents of his captivity in the prisons of Madrid. It was an insult, and the Frenchman who could endure it without seeming to notice, and without publishing it to the world, might well be named Coligny the Silent. There were compensations, however, for this disrespect. All was joy in the Netherlands; the bells rang forth the people's gratitude for peace. There was feasting in the guild-halls; there was the roasting of whole oxen on the public squares; the streets of cities ran red with wine, where soon the blood of the citizens should flow; triumphal arches were raised to adorn Philip's pathway, and even cold February sup-

plied a profusion of flowers to strew at his feet. And yet he seemed more sullen than ever, as if it were insulting for those to rejoice whom he intended to make the victims of oppression and cruelty.*

By this treaty, Andelot and his cousin Francis Montmorency were set at liberty, yet not without paying an enormous ransom. Poor Robert la March! Duke of Bouillon and high officer as he was, he could not pay the sum required without selling his estates. The avaricious Philip demanded that his wife and daughter take his place in a Flemish prison until he could pay the amount. Nor did they hesitate. Exchanging places at the dungeon doors, they were in the hands of a merciless tyrant, and he went into Picardy. Suddenly he fell into convulsions and died. The physicians pronounced it a case of poison. Had Philip caused it? None could tell; but he had violated the laws of war in the treatment of the wife and daughter. A general indignation and mistrust were the result. The outrage was a token of the short duration of the truce.†

* Motley, Dutch Republic, i. 154.

† Lacratelle, Guerres de Religion.

CHAPTER III.

FROM CAMP TO PRISON.

(1556--1557.)

THE desire to shoot a few poor birds was to open the way for breaking the truce of Vaucelles. At Rome the Spanish ambassador was rejoicing in the peace, and as he had little else to do but keep it, he resolved upon hunting excursions and feasting upon game. It was his habit to leave the city early in the morning, with his servants, horses and hounds, and sport with his fowling-piece. The gates were opened at his word. But one morning, by accident or design, he was refused an exit. He reasoned and begged, but the guard was unmoved by his logic and his pleadings. Unwilling to lose his day's sport, and enraged at the insult to his dignity, he fired the hearts of his attendants, and they fell upon the soldiers, beat them shamefully, mastered them, passed through the gate, and he took his morning's amusement.*

The sorely-beaten guards ran with their story to "the holy father," Paul IV., whom truth portrays as "a fierce, peevish, querulous and quarrelsome dotard." It is enough to say that he was a Caraffa, a lover of the Spanish Inquisition, but a hater of the Spaniards. The pope was furious over the affair at the city gate. His nephew, "the master-spirit and principal mischief-maker of the papal court," Cardinal Caraffa, added fuel to the flame. Once a wild and dissolute soldier, he was able to supply the oaths, while

* Motley's Rise of the Dutch Republic, vol. i. p. 160.

his uncle raved at the Spaniards as "heretics, schismatics, accursed of God, the spawn of Jews and Moors, the very dregs of the earth." The papal eyes were opened. The truce of Vaucelles was thought to be one of the nets of the sharp-sighted emperor, which Henry II. had sprung over Rome. The Spaniards were making havoc in the city, and the French king had bound himself to let them alone! But the truce must be broken.

The snipe-shooting envoy returned to his quarters and robed himself for the papal presence, that he might explain the slight mistake. But the pope refused to give him a hearing. "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" When war is wanted, a trifling misunderstanding calls for blows and blood. Cardinal Caraffa, who was no novice in the arts of intrigue, was sent post-haste to Paris.

"Are you not the protector of the papal chair, and of the Caraffa family in particular?" inquired the overheated cardinal.

"It is my pride thus to be called," answered King Henry. "I was crowned as the most Catholic king."

"What, then, means that truce of Vaucelles? The Spaniards are upon us, and yet you have sworn to keep hands off them for five years."

"That was merely a little happy arrangement for our good in another climate. It only applies to Flanders. As it was made without consulting the pope, it is not infallible. My secret league with the holy father is of older date, and may be of stronger force. True, I have sworn not to make war upon Philip, and my conscience—"

"The matter of conscience can be happily arranged," said the wily legate. "I have power from the pope to absolve you from your oath. And if you fear that the pope may die—for he is old and frail—and that a revolution may follow his death, we can remove this obstacle. I

will engage my uncle, the pope, to nominate cardinals who will favour you, and thus enable you to place in the papal chair one who will promote your interests." By such intrigues were popes often elected for political purposes. What a means of securing infallibility!

Henry was wrapt in sober thought. Montmorency had told him that it might be a ruinous policy to break the truce. The oath was safe; as to its being sacred, he did not care so much. Break it, and war must follow. But the Guises joined with Caraffa; Catherine began to have influence enough to make her voice heard in behalf of her native Italy; Diana brought up the reserved force of arguments; and Henry yielded: "I will be absolved; I will sign a new league with the pope."*

"You delight me. You will not leave the pontiff at the mercy of the Spaniard. You will send an army into Italy." Caraffa artfully gained his point. He was honoured with a public ovation, and as the people pressed near to get his blessing he smiled upon them, muttering to those who rode at his side, "Let us fool these poor creatures to their hearts' content, since they will be fools."

Henry summoned his counsellors. Among them were Admiral Coligny and Francis, Duke of Guise, warm friends in their youth, but in their manhood somewhat chilled in heart and distant in their greetings. Coligny took sides with those who advised the king not to send an army into Italy. The truce of Vaucelles was sacred; upon honour he had sheathed the sword; with weariness he had ridden to Brussels to get a royal signature. "It

* "The pope, apprehending the preparations which were made by the Spaniards in the realm of Naples, had recourse unto the French king and to the forces of France, the ancient refuge of popes oppressed. This was an occasion to break the truce."—*Turquet, Historie of Spaine.*

would be perjury to break the peace," said he, boldly—"a perjury fatal to the kingdom. God has in all ages been a severe avenger of such a crime."

"It is not preaching that his majesty needs," we hear Guise replying; "policy is to be consulted."

"The safety of the holy father is the first of all considerations," adds the Cardinal of Lorraine, who secretly wished to advance the Guises by having his brother sent in defence of the pope.

"We must defend our oath of peace, or God will not defend us," is Coligny's view of the subject. "The pope is to us in the place of God," replies Lorraine—a doctrine which Coligny no longer believed.

"No more theology, if you please," we hear the veteran Montmorency say; "for war is the question. I cannot advise it. The kingdom is not prepared for it."

Henry did not long waver in his choice. He had already plighted his faith to the Guises. He ordered Strozzi, his wife's Italian cousin, to hasten with some troops to Rome, and the Duke of Guise to organize a regular army. We shall not follow them in their campaigns. The honest heart of Coligny was pained when he saw such recklessness of oaths that ought to be sacred, and such a disregard of God, to whom they were made. From this hour he understood the Guises, and they hated him with all their soul.*

The admiral returned to his government of Picardy, to prepare for war in the very face of that peace which he had so lately pledged his honour to maintain. He would not strike the first blow. He put himself on the defensive. The crisis swiftly approached. The perfidy of Henry II. was soon reported at Brussels. The Spanish Philip had married Mary, but he was not sure that he had won Eng-

* D'Auvigny, Vie de Guise; Cornaton (?), Memoires de Colligny.

land. The fire kindled in Europe from Naples to Calais might melt the jewels of the crown just received from his father the emperor. Charles might find a retreat among the monks of Yuste, and do penance for his sins of ambition and war, but his son must go on repeating the sins and striving for the empire of the world. Philip had reason to set at naught the five years' truce of Vaucelles, and he renewed the contest with France. He sent a herald, after the ancient fashion, to inform the French king that war was proclaimed against France. The herald stood in the capital and in the presence of the court, and talked in such a bold tone of defiance that the flaming old constable, Montmorency, wished to make short work of his insolence, and strongly urged his master to hang the envoy on the spot. Philip was in England, coldly visiting his unamiable wife, and with great difficulty securing British troops for the war. He put his army under Philibert, Duke of Savoy, a brave young hunter of men, who had been known "to eat, drink and sleep in his armour for thirty days together." Instead of paying his addresses to the half-Protestant Princess Elizabeth of England, he must take the field and besiege some of the great towns on the northern borders of Picardy.

The eye of Coligny was upon the movements of the Duke of Savoy, whom he knew to be ready to crush him by any means in his power. The admiral had advanced his forces toward the city of Douay, before the formal declaration of war, assured that a larger army would soon be on the march, under his uncle Montmorency, his brother Francis of Andelot, now the colonel-general of infantry, and the young Louis de Bourbon, Prince of Condé. Motley relates the success of the attempt upon Douay in terms which enliven history with the charms of vivid portraiture:

"It happened that a certain banker of Lucca, an ancient

gambler and debauchee, whom evil courses had reduced from affluence to penury, had taken up his abode upon a hill overlooking the city of Douay. Here he had built himself a hermit's cell. Clad in sackcloth, with a rosary at his waist, he was accustomed to beg his bread from door to door. His garb was all, however, which he possessed of sanctity, and he had passed his time in contemplating the weak points in the defences of the city with much more minuteness than those of his own heart. Upon the breaking out of hostilities in Italy, the instincts of his old profession had suggested to him that a good speculation might be made in Flanders by turning to account, as a spy, the observations which he had made in his character of a hermit. He sought an interview with Coligny, and laid his propositions before him. The noble admiral hesitated, for his sentiments were more elevated than those of many of his contemporaries. He had, moreover, himself negotiated and signed the truce with Spain, and he shrank from violating it with his own hand before a declaration of war. Still, he was aware that a French army was on its way to attack the Spaniards in Italy; he was under instructions to take the earliest advantage which his position on the frontier might offer him; he knew that both theory and practice authorized a general, in that age, to break his fast, even in time of truce, if a tempting morsel should present itself;* and, above all, he thoroughly understood the character of his nearest antagonist, the new governor of the Netherlands, Philibert of Savoy, whom he knew to be the most unscrupulous chieftain in Europe. These considerations decided him to take advantage of the hermit-banker's communication.

"A day was accordingly fixed, at which, under the guidance of this newly-acquired ally, a surprise should be

* Brantome, Vie de l'Admiral de Chatillon.

attempted by the French forces, and the unsuspecting city of Douay given over to the pillage of a brutal soldiery. The time appointed was the night of Epiphany, upon occasion of which festival it was thought the inhabitants, overcome with sleep and wassail, might be easily overpowered (6th January, 1557). The plot was a good plot, but the admiral of France was destined to be foiled by an old woman.* This person, apparently the only creature awake in the town, perceived the danger, ran shrieking through the streets, alarmed the citizens while it was yet time, and thus prevented the attack. Coligny, disappointed in his plan, recompensed his soldiers by a sudden onslaught upon Sens in Artois, which he sacked and then levelled with the ground." If Coligny gave such a license to his troops, there must have been strong reasons for departing from his usual restraints of discipline, and from the merciful disposition which is almost universally ascribed to him.

The Duke of Savoy pushed forward his army, pillaged and burned Vervins and made a feint against the town of Guise. Coligny saw that the real object of attack was Saint Quentin. This old frontier town of Picardy stood on a hill, which sloped down to the river Somme. A broad ditch lay around the outer wall. On three sides was a marsh, deep enough, in certain places, to be called a lake. It was worth saving, not only for its wealth and manufactures, but because it was on the high road to Paris. If the enemy should capture it, he might rush to the seizure of the capital.

Teligny,† whose grandson was to obtain the hand of the young Louisa Coligny, was in the city with a few men. He and the captain of the town sent word to the admiral that

* Perau, Vie de Coligny; Lacratelle, Guerres de Religion.

† Motley is mistaken in saying that he was "son-in-law of the admiral."

they were in great peril. They needed men and supplies. The forces of the enemy had begun the siege, crowding in between the walls and the river, and taking possession of the houses in the suburbs. Coligny knew that it was useless to wait for the main army under Montmorency to come to the relief of the city, for the divisions were posted at several points, distant from each other. He knew that every hour lessened the possibility of reinforcing the garrison. He thought how important was the place to France; it stood as the defence of the capital; if it fell, Paris might be taken. His plans were rapidly formed, and as "he was not the man to let the grass grow under his feet," he set out with reinforcements of ten or twelve hundred men, horse and foot. It was the second of August. The race was warm between him and certain English troops, which were hurrying to join the besiegers. They first reached the camp at Saint Quentin, and blocked up the route by which the admiral hoped to enter the city. But he was determined to force his way. His officers protested against his attempt. His army was slow to catch his enthusiasm. In his anxiety he outstripped the movements of his troops. Only seven hundred men followed him, as the gates were opened to admit him, when the midnight air rang with the cheers of the besieged little band; the rest had failed through weariness, mistaken the path or proved unfaithful to duty. He had listened to no voice save the desperate entreaties of the garrison, and his great thought had been the defence of his country. Shutting himself up in the city and trusting in God, he resolved to maintain it by his skill and experience or share its dismal fate.

As the gates closed upon Coligny the road was blocked up for his advancing troops. His uncle was at La Fere, hearing daily of the state of affairs, and doing all that he could to send relief, but disappointed in every effort. The

place was even weaker than the admiral had expected to find it. The walls could not endure a cannonade; the towers were unfit for use; the magazines had in them a fair supply of ammunition, but there were not fifty muskets in good repair. The stores of provisions would be exhausted in three weeks. The admiral must make the best of his condition, and be active. From the towers he saw where to operate. One of the first steps was to prevent the enemy from approaching nearer to the walls and hiding in the suburban houses and among the trees. The ditch was crossed, the trees levelled, and the houses which could give "aid and comfort" to the enemy burned to the ground.

For a few days the admiral was ill, and against his express orders Teligny made an imprudent sortie, hoping to signalize his courage. He was stricken down by the foe, and rescued by the hands of Coligny, who, at great peril, rushed forth and brought him back, covered with wounds, to implore pardon and to die at the feet of his forgiving commander. The loss of the popular captain was greatly regretted by all. Weaker and weaker grew the garrison. Shorter rations were given to the besieged, and lest one common fate of starvation should involve them all, Coligny sent out all useless consumers. He quartered the women in the cathedral and other churches, locking the doors, lest their tears or their terror should weaken the courage of the soldiers. It was an act of mercy, as well as a military necessity, for it saved the weak from the insults of the strong.

The more desperate affairs became, the more cheerful were the face and the words of Coligny. Those whom he inspired with confidence knew not the agonies of fear which he experienced while visiting his soldiers by night, or standing by day in the watch-tower and looking in vain for the banners of Andelot or Montmorency. At length, from his tower, he discovered a route by which it might be possible

to introduce reinforcements. There was a point where the marsh was forded along a few narrow and difficult paths, and a running stream might be crossed in boats. He sent a messenger to his uncle, suggesting his plan. The eager old constable lost no time. He ordered his nephew, Andelot, to lead two thousand men across the marshes and join his brother. The bold colonel-general set out by night with his men, full of hope and audacious in enterprise. But the guide was either ignorant of the paths or treacherous to his countrymen, and he led the cautious soldiers up to an outpost of the enemy, where they were attacked, repulsed and routed. Some were cut to pieces, many were drowned in the marshes, and the remnant escaped with their gallant leader to the camp at La Fere. Coligny now saw this secret route beset with enemies.

The ninth of August came, and the Romish besiegers were thinking of the festival of St. Lawrence, which Montmorency was as ready to honour as they, for he was a staunch papist. But they might not be so willing as himself to make battle upon a saint's day. He resolved to make another attempt to throw a force into the city and in broad daylight, with Andelot at the head. His plan was to cross the river Somme, Coligny furnishing the boats. He put his entire army in motion—eighteen thousand footmen and six thousand cavalry, most of them foreign mercenaries, but commanded by an array of the finest nobles and cavaliers of France, many of whom had been reading in their tents the books of the Reformers.

The next morning, that of the memorable day of St. Lawrence, Montmorency took his position on the banks of the Somme,* in full face of the enemy, who was as much surprised by the sudden appearance of the French as if they had dropped from the clouds. The shots that fell upon the

* Prescott's Philip the Second.

Spaniards threw them into great disorder. The tent of the Duke of Savoy was torn in pieces, and he had barely time to snatch up his armour and escape, with his forces, to safer quarters, three miles down the river.

This cheap success elated Montmorency as if it had been a victory, and he hastened to pass his troops across the river. But the boats were not ready; two hours were spent in obtaining them, and even then there were not more than half a dozen, and these so small that the process of crossing was slow. The overloaded boats sometimes capsized in the stream, and sometimes were swamped in the marshes. Some of the men were drowned; others sank in the mire when landing; and others were shot down by the advancing foe when climbing up the steep banks. A few were pressing forward to the gates opened to receive them. Meanwhile the strategy of the enemy was changed.

In a windmill was posted Louis, the Prince of Condé, and his eye ranged over the Spanish camp. He saw that the enemy was crossing the river at a ford, and preparing to sweep down upon the French army. He advised Montmorency of the movement, and suggested a retreat. The veteran did not relish advice from so young an officer, and testily replied, "I was a soldier before the Prince of Condé was born; and, by the blessing of Heaven, I trust to teach him some good lessons in war for many a year to come." He would not quit the ground while a man of Andelot's relieving force remained on his side of the river. The few little boats never had done such straining service, and yet, with all the fatal mishaps, only about four hundred and fifty men,* wet, weary and wounded, threw themselves into Saint Quentin with their valorous leader Andelot. The two

* Environ cinq cens hommes, tous soldats d'élite. Among them was the famous engineer Saint Remy—homme fort experimente, qui avoit servi si utilement au siège de Metz.—*Perau, Vie de Coligny.*

Coligny brothers led their men to the walls to resist the force of Spaniards who still remained on their side of the stream. It was not Saint Quentin, it was Paris and all France, that they were defending.

When Montmorency saw the last boat push off, he gave instant orders for a retreat. But the Spaniards, under Count Egmont, pressed upon him. Turning to an old officer, he asked what was best to do. "Had you asked me," was the reply, "two hours since, I could have told you; it is now too late." There was nothing to do but face about and fight the pursuers. Desperate was the clash of arms; many a brave cavalier fell; many a young noble won renown. In one hour about sixteen thousand soldiers in the French service were wounded, slain and captured; only six thousand stood in the broken ranks. Among many noble prisoners was Montmorency, severely wounded, and humiliated as never before. Condé escaped, when flight seemed out of the question, to display his prowess and fall at last in the cause of the Huguenots.

Saint Quentin still was defended by the Colignys and their eight hundred soldiers. The admiral was driven almost to despair by the total overthrow of the main army, of which, however, he knew nothing for two days; but he thought that the longer he bravely held out the greater the advantage to his country. He might keep the enemy from marching upon Paris. The remaining citizens were in terror, wishing that Coligny would steal away and leave them to make terms of peace. Then it was that he displayed all the strength of his character. He called the people together, and in an eloquent speech proved to them that the safety of their country was to be valued above their property and lives. He caused them to take oath that if any of them should speak of surrender he should lose his head for it. He also took the oath, resigning his

head to them if they should hear him talk of yielding up the town. Hope was not all gone, for the Duke of Nevers had gathered together the wreck of the defeated army, and mustered new forces for the relief of Saint Quentin. He and Coligny managed to correspond with each other.

A fisherman pointed out a hidden path, several feet under water, through which a hundred and fifty unarmed and half-drowned men joined the garrison. For seventeen days the walls were battered, mines were dug under them and breaches were made by shots and explosions. The skilful engineer, Saint Remy, did wonders in repairing the broken walls, but the time came when the genius of the engineer and the courage of the admiral were of no further avail. The eleven breaches were past repair. Again the Duke of Savoy assaulted the town; after an hour's severe fighting, the besiegers were repulsed at all points and mortified to madness. Resting a little, they renewed the attack. Where the walls were most broken the bravest men were placed, and the Spaniards, therefore, aimed at a tower which had been left almost unguarded. It was carried. The assailants mounted the ramparts and claimed the mastery. Then poured in Spaniards, Germans and English, thirsting for blood, prisoners and plunder. Coligny rushed to the spot, willing to engage the enemy single-handed. His brother and a few followers sprang to his aid. But the men were overpowered, trodden down, disarmed and captured. Still the garrison made a desperate stand, until almost smothered by thick ranks of soldiers. At last the town was taken, and the late fierce conflict seemed tame in comparison with the scenes of rioting and violence which followed. The wretched citizens fled in dismay, hiding in corners and garrets or seeking escape through the broken walls.

Coligny was smiting the foe right and left, having near

him but four soldiers and his page, when Francisco Diaz, a simple Spaniard, and his comrades drew near, casting an eye on every side, and more intent on booty than prisoners. A Frenchman took him aside and said, "That is the admiral." *

"What!" exclaimed Diaz, rushing upon Coligny and striking him several times with his sword; "are you the admiral?"

"I am," was the reply; "and remember that the fortune of arms is variable. To-day it falls ill to me; to-morrow it may fall ill to you; this should oblige you to deal fairly and justly with your prisoners."

"Let me have a part!" cried a fierce soldier, eager for spoil, and threatening to fall upon the admiral, who kept him at bay. The soldiers then had a small fray between themselves. This new Spanish quarrel, perhaps, saved Coligny's life. Diaz became sole possessor of the prisoner.

But Diaz was so intent upon pillage that he asked, "Where is there a good house for me to sack? Where can I put you, Monsieur l'Admiral, till I get my share?" A place was found. Coligny was ordered to wait his time.

"You do very wrong to seek plunder," said the admiral. "It is quite enough that you have taken me. I beg of you to lead me away." Diaz conducted him to the tent of the Duke of Savoy, and hastened back to the ravages of the town. Poor hirelings made themselves rich with spoils. By night the soldiers ransacked houses, churches, and even the vaults of the dead. The dying lay everywhere, beg-

* Un de ceux qui étoit avec moi, dit que j'étois l'admiral; lors il s'addressa à moi et me tira quelques coups d'épée—*Coligny, Mem. de St. Quentin.*

Full accounts of the battle of Saint Quentin in Perau, Vie de Coligny; Thuani, Historia, lib. xix.; Prescott, Philip II.; Motley, Rise of the Dutch Republic. I have followed Coligny's own reports.

ging in vain for mercy. The living, stripped, plundered and outraged, saw their houses set on fire. King Philip, who had come to the scene of his proud victory, ordered that all the living inhabitants should be banished. A Spanish soldier, whe kept a diary of all that occurred, says of the desolations: "I wandered through the place, gazing at all this, and it seemed to me that it was another destruction of Jerusalem. What most struck me was to find not a single denizen of the town left who was or dared to call himself French. How vain and transitory, thought I, are the things of this world!" Philip found a brighter side to the victory, and, because the greater battle had been fought on St. Lawrence's day,* he built the Escurial in the form of a gridiron, on which the saint was said to have been put to death. It would have been quite just to interpret the gridiron shape of the palace to mean that he would prove one of the fiercest of all persecutors.

Andelot, of whom his brother said in his report, "he often did in one day what we hard toilers would not have done in a month," battled on for an hour after the wall which he defended was broken, and finally gave up his sword. He was placed in a tent under a strong guard. Perhaps the watchers took turns in the business of pillage, and gave the less attention to him. He remembered Milan, and, slipping out under the canvas, made the marshes his refuge. Coligny wrote the next day to his king, "There is so great a noise in the camp, and so happy evidence that my brother has escaped, that I leave it for him to tell you the particulars of the battle."* If Andelot went speedily to the court, he found a cabal † of the Guises in comfortable spirits over the

* Perau, Vie d'Andelot.

† Un cable puissante qui ne meditoit rien moins que de tout renverser pour parvenier à son but; c'étoient les Guises, princes dévorés d'une ambition effrénée, etc.—*Perau.*

capture of the admiral and Montmorency. On their ruin the house of Lorraine might rise. With them patriotism was among the vanities.

"I do not know where I shall be sent," wrote Coligny to his king, three days after the capture, "but I pray our Lord to keep you in good health, and give you a long life."* The next month he was sent under arms to the castle of Sluys in Flanders, and thence to Ghent, where on the very brink of the grave he was to find the riches of the gospel.

One day a Spaniard entered his quarters, bowing, smiling and acting the most obedient with a grace quite impressive. He recognized the soldier. "I come to pray you to give me a certificate, signed with your own hand, that I captured your honour at Saint Quentin."

"You shall have it." Coligny wrote the commendation, and Francisco Diaz got his reward—perhaps a second time. He must have learned cool impertinence of his master Philip.

It has been said by his enemies that Coligny saved France, although he lost St. Quentin. In the eyes of men his brilliant conduct seemed to result in failure, but out of it God would bring success to his own cause. Two effects are apparent—one upon the hero, and another upon the French Protestants. If Coligny had achieved a victory, none can tell what promotion might have been his reward, nor what might have prevented him from becoming a devoted Christian. The way to heaven seemed to lie through a prison and through deep adversity, and he took it. In his affliction he saw the hand of God, and gave thanks. The loss of St. Quentin was to him a mystery. When false reports of it were published, he took his pen to write his page of history. It was probably after divine truth had dawned upon his mind. His simple narrative reveals his

* Date, August 30, 1557.

honesty, his love of truth, his patriotism and his ardent spiritual feelings. He sees that God has willed all his adversities, and he submits as one who has just come through a new Christian experience. He says: "All the comfort which I have is that which, it seems to me, all Christians ought to have; namely, that such mysteries do not take place without the permission and will of God, which is always good, holy and reasonable, and which effects nothing without just reasons, of which, however, I need not know the cause, and of which also I have no great need to inquire, but rather to humble myself before him in conforming myself to his will."*

The Protestants of France were the gainers by the affair of St. Quentin. If the French had won the day, the king would doubtless have vented his pride and his joy in some severer measures against those who were already under the ban. What a thank-offering, the blood of believers! If Coligny had not held back the Spaniards, if they had swept down upon Paris, and if they had put France under foot, then what woe to the Protestants! But this was prevented. The French were humiliated. The king and his council had something else to think of than persecuting the secret worshippers of God. The former looked to the defence of the endangered State; the latter took advantage of the crisis and quietly promoted the interests of the Reformed Church. We shall find the Protestants taking a bold step in the advance. The State is chastised in order that the Church may grow.

* Discours de Gaspar de Colligny (*sic*), Seigneur de Chatillon, Admiral de France, ou sont sommairement conténues les choses qui se sont passées durant le siége de Saint Quentin. Dated December 29, 1557.

CHAPTER IV.

A BOLDER PROTESTANTISM.

(1555–1558.)

THE consecration of a child was the occasion for organizing the first Protestant church in Paris, and indeed the first successful one in all France. The materials had become abundant; a model of construction was needed. Henry II. had supposed that few others than the "common people," in their quiet retreats, dared openly to avow the Reformed doctrines. By spying, ferreting out and hounding down a solitary "gospeller" here and there, even among the more intelligent classes, he hoped to keep the people in terror of having any thoughts of their own. By the edict of Châteaubriand (1551) all right of heretics to property was taken away; no plea was allowed them in the courts; they were forbidden to petition the king or the parliament. Almost every year had its new and severer edict. "That which strikes one most forcibly in reading the criminal registers under this reign is the number of rigorous measures enacted against the sectaries of Luther and Calvin. Scarcely a day passed without some judgment in the case of heresy."*

But truth is not to be terrified when Heaven orders its advance. It laid hold upon the stronger classes. It had

* Taillandier, Mémoire sur les Registres du Parliament de Paris, pendant le Règne de Henri II., Paris, 1842. Voltaire scarcely touched the great subject in his Histoire du Parliament.

an attraction for wealthy citizens, busy merchants, shrewd bankers, thinking lawyers and students of history. Knights and nobles, by their castle-hearths, or even in their tents and by their camp-fires, began to read the witty words of Erasmus, the trenchant letters of Ulric Hutten, or the stately sentences of Calvin's "Institutes." No embargo upon foreign books, no injunctions served upon the press in France, no espionage upon readers in their homes, could sweep back the sea of truth that rolled in upon the land. As well make contraband the air and the light; as well seal the fountains that supplied the rivers. It was the old fight of God's word against human power, and vain were the threats of man. And yet the Reform was thus far a private work; there was need of an organized Protestantism. It was to begin with "the Church in the house."

There came to sojourn in Paris a Monsieur la Ferrière, somewhat as Aquilla lodged in Corinth. He sought a liberty which his province of Maine had denied him. His house showed him to be a man of wealth; his conversation proved his learning and piety. He knew how to get upon the track of the *Christaudins*, the gospellers, the secret disciples, whether in the Latin Quarter, where Calvin once held the little meetings, and where the fires had not gone out, or within the halls of the palace. He put himself in friendly relations with them. They met at his house for worship; they shared with him in the tender interest which he felt for his new-born child.

"It must be consecrated to God," said he; and we have nothing now to do with the correctness of all his views. "What if it should die without being given to him! I cannot bear the thought of having it baptized by a Romish priest. I want no superstitious rites performed. And Geneva is too far away; we cannot go there with the child.

Let us elect some one among us to be our pastor and to administer the holy sacraments."

Surprise was upon the face of all who heard this proposal. Who of them was fit for the solemn office? What right had they to call any one? "It will cause trouble," replied the cautious, who for more than twenty years had known the deadly cost of fortitude. "Remember how the flock at Meaux, and then at Metz, was scattered. We shall all be banished or burned."

"Courage is a proof of faith," answered the earnest La Ferrière, "and faith will secure God's defence. It is time for us to have a church."

The good man spoke from his heart, as one raised up for a great crisis. He carried the minds of the devout people. They knelt and in tears asked God's will. They fasted, they consulted the divine word, they made it the mighty question; they met again, and took the solemn resolution. The line between doubt and decision was crossed. The moment for an election came. What if God should throw confusion into their deliberations? They cast their votes. One name expressed the choice of all; it was that of the young John Maçon, called also De Launay and La Rivière.

In the town of Angers lived a rich lawyer, De Launay, who hated the Reformation. Hearing that his son John, whom he had sent into Switzerland, had tasted the "heresies" of Geneva, he instantly called him home, and set him down to study law. The son obeyed. He listened to all the persuasions and warnings of his father; then came tears, entreaties and threats, but he was unmoved from his faith. "Your father intends to have you arrested," said certain friends. "Escape at once. We will aid you." He saw that he must leave father, mother, wealth and honours for the Gospel's sake. He fled to Paris, cast his lot with the gospellers, won their esteem, and now received their

unanimous call to a sacred office. He was but twenty-two years of age. He could not decline a service for the Church under the cross. He was properly ordained—by whom we know not—and his ministry began with power from on high.

The heart of La Ferrière was more than gratified. With the baptism of his child an infant church arose in Paris during the September of 1555. Elders and deacons were chosen, and such rules established as the wretched times would permit. "It was organized," says Beza, "according to the example of the Church in primitive times."* A model was now furnished to all the Reformed of the kingdom. It was imitated with astonishing rapidity. That very year John de Launay went to his native town, whence his father had driven him, and organized a church; other churches were founded at Meaux and in the districts of Poitiers, Saintonge, and Guyenne. Within the next three years there were scores of them in the various provinces. King Henry did not estimate the growth of an organization which was gathering to itself the majority of the nobles, enlisting the services of princes, and destined to shake the kingdom by its stately tread, almost sweep away the throne in its advance, and make the name of Huguenot glorious through all generations. His father had aided in securing Protestant liberty to Geneva; his minions had sent Calvin thither as an exile, and now that exile was beginning to hold an influence over France even greater than that of her kings.

There were, however, sharp eyes turned upon the little band of the faithful in Paris. Monks and priests did not cease to thunder aloud from their pulpits against their assemblies, and represent them as guilty of profaning the sacred mysteries, and practicing the darkest crimes under

* Histoire des Eglises Réformées, liv. ii.; Puaux, Histoire de la Reformation Française, liv. vii.; Laval, Hist. Ref. in France, bk. i.

pretence of worship. The people gave credit to these slanders, and shuddered to think that there dwelt among them such an odious immoral fraternity. From one house to another the faithful transferred their assemblies, hoping to elude the vigilance of the magistrates. For two years no attack was made upon them as a body, and they engaged the mansion called the Hotel de Bertomier, for a church. It stood in the street St. Jacques, near the colleges of the university, at the time when the campaigns of Guise and Coligny drew the public attention from the Protestants.

Just when the losses at Saint Quentin threw all Paris into alarm, and when every cloud of dust might betoken the march of the Spaniards, the Protestants met quietly and more boldly in their place of worship. Who would be seeking victims for the stake at such a time? Was not Romanism satisfied with the fifty thousand who had been slain as martyrs during twenty-five years? One evening three or four hundred Protestants, of all ranks and from all quarters of Paris, met to sing the Psalms of Marot, listen to their pastor, and celebrate the Lord's Supper. "Among them were many ladies of the court, some of them closely attached to the queen. The historians appear to me to have taken too little notice of this fact," says Lacratelle, who adheres to the Roman Church, but has a fair appreciation of the Reform; "I see in it a first indication of the policy and character of Catherine de Medici. Her rival, Diana, was the most cruel enemy of the Protestants. The queen, without loving them, doubtless held some credit among them, and she sought to win their confidence."* She had Protestant ladies in her court, and allowed them to choose their own place of worship.

Students of the colleges and priests of the Sorbonne watched the people gathering in the Rue St. Jacques. With

* Lacratelle, Guerres de Religion, liv. iii.

horror they thought of the mass being displaced by the Lord's Supper, and what else they knew not. It was a good hour to show their zeal. They ran about exciting the alarm of the citizens. The word passed from house to house. Whispering neighbours met in groups, blustered and made threats, seized whatever cheap and rude missiles they could find, and went lumbering along to the scene.

The simple-hearted worshippers, eager for the divine word as those of Troas to whom Paul preached nearly through the whole night, innocently allowed the tumult to increase by the length of their services. It was near midnight when they opened the doors to go home. But what was their terror when they were greeted on the threshold with a volley of stones! They saw the windows of the houses lighted up, so that no Calvinist might escape under cover of the darkness.* Torches glared in the streets; cries, shouts, hootings, shrieks, curses and threats filled the air. More distant citizens and the guards heard the uproar, and they grasped the arms which they had ready for the descent of the victors of Saint Quentin.† The tumult became general. Some asked, "Have the Spaniards come to the gates?"

"Not yet," was the answer, "but there are wretches here who have sold the kingdom."

"Cursed traitors!" cried others. "They rejoice in the misfortunes of France. Death to the heretics!" The street was blockaded by the rabble.

The pastor and elders sought to prepare the flock for the worst. "Let us pray that God may come to our aid," said a good old man, and they fell upon their knees, lifting their hands to heaven. Their voices were lost to human ears by the loud derisions of the mob. The divine ear heard them.

"What shall we do?" inquired some of those who bore

* Lacratelle. † Laval.

swords at their sides, a part of a gentleman's outfit at that day. "We cannot expect a miracle from God, nor mercy from cruel men. Shall we tear up the seats, barricade the doors and wait for the king's guards to deliver us?"

"That would be certain death," said others. "We must defend ourselves, and if need be cut our way through the crowd." They started, presenting a bold front to the rioters, a part of whom fell back a little, while another part hurled all sorts of missiles and brandished their pikes. A goodly number escaped with their lives, though many were severely wounded. Only one man fell; he was trodden down, and so mutilated as to lose almost all likeness to a human being.*

What of those who had not the courage to follow their leaders? Most of them were women and children. They sought to fly through the garden, but every path was watched. They barricaded the doors and windows, and waited for the dawn. Even then they were beaten back when they attempted to escape. They heard the blows of men who were forcing the doors, and with clasped hands begged for mercy; but the mob was pitiless. Just then arrived one of the king's officers and his band of sergeants. At the sight of so many helpless women and children, exposed to every outrage, his heart was touched; he shed tears; his first emotions were humane. But when he learned that these innocents had dared to observe the Lord's Supper instead of the Romish mass, his pity gave way to anger. He must execute the law, and it had no mercy for heretics. We desist from reciting the insults and outrages inflicted, while fully one hundred and twenty of them were led to prison.†

* Uno excepto, qui in turba occisus est, says De Thou.

† De Thou has it, "fere cxx;" Lacratelle, "Plus de deux cents personnes furent arrêtées et livrées à mille outrages," etc.

The slanders were renewed. Nameless crimes and shocking impieties were charged upon "those of the religion." It was the old libel of the ancient pagans against the early Christians. Yet the very coarseness of the charges led to inquiry, and the truth was found by those who had never sought it before. The parliament was too mild for the Cardinal of Lorraine, and he arranged it to have the accused tried before Judge Meusnier, a man guilty of perjury and very profligate. This was too much, for the judge was so unjust that his case was taken in hand, and only a mob saved him from the pillory and banishment. And yet some were to take the fiery chariot to heaven. One was an aged deacon; another a lawyer; and a third was the young widow Philippa de Luns, who had come to Paris in order to place herself in the fold of the Reformed Church. Such was the general result: a few more martyrs and many believers placed where they bore new testimony to the sustaining power of religion. Beza speaks of those who were closely confined in the prison of the Chatelet, and adds: "However, God, who always takes care of his own, provided that they should not remain without consolations. For, in consequence of the great number of the prisoners, the jailors had been forced to put several in the same place, so that among them there always chanced to be some one endowed with more fortitude than his companions, to give courage to the others. On all sides psalms were sung, and the whole Chatelet resounded with the praises of God—a sufficient proof of the singular confidence they had in their own hearts of their own innocence."

At Geneva, Calvin and Farel lifted up their voices, and roused all Protestant Europe to intercede for the prisoners. Calvin raised his mighty pen against the sword, the fagot and the axe. He wrote to King Henry, laying before him an abstract of the creed of the Reformed churches of

France,* and pleading him "to have compassion on those who seek but to serve God in simplicity, while they loyally acquit themselves of their duty toward you." He also wrote to "the women detained in prison at Paris," reminding them of "the courage and constancy of women at the death of our Lord Jesus Christ; when the apostles had forsaken him, how they continued by him with marvellous constancy; and how a woman was the messenger to announce his resurrection. . . . If God then so honoured and fortified them, think you not that he will do so now? How many thousands of women have spared neither blood nor life to maintain the name of Jesus Christ and to announce his reign! Has not their martyrdom borne fruit? Has not their faith obtained the glory of the world as well as that of other martyrs?" He appealed to the Swiss churches to make a collection for "the brethren of Paris," saying, "Though money is not readily to be found in these parts, I shall assuredly so bestir myself, should I be obliged to pawn my head and feet, that it will be found forthcoming here."

Among the noble captives was the wife of the Chevalier Rentigny, standard-bearer of the Duke of Guise. Every effort was made to shake her faith, but in the winter, when her cell was cold, Beza wrote: "Most of the captives hold out very courageously, so that a lady, the most distinguished of all the prisoners for the nobility of her birth and the wealth of her friends, openly refused the pardon offered her, spurning the tears and prayers both of her father [the Seigneur de Rambouillet] and of her husband—one worthy certainly of being commended to the Lord by

* Calvin's Letters, Presbyterian Board of Publication, vol. iii., No. ccccIxxx. He said: "You have here, Sire, an undisguised and unvarnished summary of our faith. . . . We hope our apology will be admitted by you as reasonable."

name." She was encouraged by a letter from Calvin, and continued faithful through all the winter. But her judges threatened, and her husband entreated, until she finally consented to hear mass in her prison. She listened to it, but took no part in the service. Scarcely was she set at liberty, when she blushed for her weakness, and begged a pardon from the Lord and from the pastors of the church at Paris. One of the pastors wrote to Calvin, saying: "We have consented that Madame de Rentigny should return to her husband, because he is labouring under a very severe illness, and he made us the most ample promises that he would not interfere with her faith. Already the horses had been purchased to convey her to your city [on the way to Italy]. Certainly, up to this moment she has borne herself most courageously." Calvin kindly wrote to her again, saying: "Lay it down as a rule of conduct, that you are not to fill up the measure of your offences by adding others to their number." She adhered to this good rule for trying times. De Thou relates that she was received among the queen's ladies of honour, several of whom secretly professed the Reformed religion.

We present her as a specimen* of the sufferers in whom all Protestant Europe felt a deep interest. The heroism displayed was equal to that of Coligny at Saint Quentin. It was bringing some relief. The pen of Calvin had waked up the German princes; they laid their protests before the French king, and he arrested the work of martyrdom. Some of the younger prisoners were sent to monasteries to be cured of heresy, and, not being very narrowly watched, certain of them escaped. Others heard

* Other cases are portrayed in Calvin's Letters, many of which were were written to the church of Paris, to individual sufferers and to various persecuted churches of France. These letters bear witness to the rapid growth of the Reformation in the French kingdom.

mass in prison, without assenting to it, and were absolved. But not a few said, "Let come what will, we cannot yield; we will die in our cells first." King Henry needed the support of the Protestants.

The perils of the nation again drew the public mind from the Reformed Church. Francis, now Duke of Guise, had won small success in Italy. He was recalled to take the place of Coligny and Montmorency. It was on his speedy journey that the Duchess Renée saved so many thousands of his troops. In Paris the king said to him, "You are come to save France." The streets rang with cheers: "The hero of Metz will retrieve the loss of Saint Quentin."

"Let us have him made viceroy," said the Guise faction, who sought to take every advantage of the popular enthusiasm and elevate him above the unfortunate Montmorency and the admiral.*

"Vice-Roi?" replied the wiser ones, trying how the word would sound. "Rather a new title in France. The people have hardly got to that yet. Let us create for him the office of lieutenant-general of the king's armies, which will amount to the same thing. It will put him above the constable, and the Colignys may then make the best of it." Thus they whispered their ambitious views, but took pains to say openly that the title was only a compliment.

The office was granted by king and by Parliament, the president being a friend to the house of Lorraine. The duke was sent to take Calais from the English—a bold undertaking, for it was then the Gibraltar of England, "the brightest jewel in her crown." For two hundred years she had held it, and France had not dared to wrest it from her grasp. Over the gate had long been written this insolent couplet:

* Proposérent de la faire Vice-Roi; mais ce titre étant noveau en France.—*D'Aurigny, Vie de Guise.*

"Then shall Frenchmen Calais win,
When iron and lead like cork shall swim."

Already had Coligny spied out the roads across the marshes, drawn maps, formed a plan for its recapture and laid it before his king, sent forward the heroic Briquemaut in disguise to enter and examine the works, and soon he had expected to place the French banner over the walls. But the call to Saint Quentin had drawn him away from the coast. Did Guise profit by all this? The point has been disputed. It appears that when he laid his own plan before the king, Henry did not approve of it, but sent to Madame Coligny, asking for the papers of her husband. She loaned them. Guise read them, but was not yet convinced. The king brought in one of Coligny's officers, who had aided him in forming the first plan, and it was adopted, to the satisfaction of Andelot, who served in the campaign.

Leading his troops over the frozen marches and dikes, Guise surprised the ancient town on the first day of the year 1558, and in eight days recovered what Edward III. had won by a twelve months' siege. Other towns were speedily captured, and French glory was restored. A nation was loud in its praise of the conqueror. He was named "the saviour of his country." An odious parallel was drawn between the new lieutenant-general and the admiral. The people cared little to know that Coligny had furnished the plan of the siege.* Guise had executed it, and that was

* "C'étoit l'ouvrage de Coligni."—*Perau, Vie de Coligny.* "Coligni avoit formé avant sa prison le dessein d'attaquer, . . . et formé le plan du siège qu'on trouva dans ses papiers; il fut donné au Duc de Guise, qui le suivit, et prit la place."—*D'Auvigny, Vie de Guise.* These are not "écrivains Protestans," who seek to glorify "les talens et les services de l'Amiral de Coligni," as Lacratelle urges; yet, as he well says, "Le mérite de l'execution est tout, dans les opérations de ce genre."—*Thuani Historia; Garnier, Historie de France.*

enough. Justice now accords wisdom to the one and splendid military skill to the other. But in that day the event contributed to the formation of two parties, whose watchwords were the names of these leaders. Coligny, who had saved France, was treated with ingratitude.

By what measures should this victory be celebrated? The Lorraine brothers had two proposals to make. The cardinal had been anxious for an edict which would establish in France the Spanish Inquisition. The parliament had refused to grant it. He now took courage. What a proof of gratitude for the recent successes would it be to crush out all liberty of thought and worship! But the parliament again hesitated. The title "Inquisition" was odious; the Spanish model was too perfect in horrors, too elaborate in its means of detecting secret opinions, and too thoroughly furnished with hidden engines of death, for the French people. A modified form was adopted. A court of inquiry was appointed, of which there were three members—the cardinals of Lorraine, of Bourbon, and of Chatillon.* The last was Odet Coligny, who was beginning to look into the books which his brother had read in the prison at Milan, and to cherish a secret regard for the Protestants. They had power to arrest, imprison, arraign and condemn suspected heretics, without distinction of rank or quality. And yet they did little. Was it because they dared not, or did Odet's gentle counsels prevail? It was rather because of a limit put to the power of the tribunal. The accused had the right of appeal to the civil courts. This did not suit the Cardinal of Lorraine. Simply to declare men heretics was not enough; they must be exterminated. "This restriction," says the Abbé Garnier, "without doubt saved the nation from a yoke which it detested"—a yoke that

* Taillandier, Registres du Parliament; Garnier, Histoire de France, tome xxvii.; Lacratelle, Beza, Laval.

could not fail to be resisted by "the number and rank of the partisans of the new doctrine, one of whom was a member of the tribunal."

The Duke of Guise had his scheme. The conqueror asked that his niece, Mary of Scots, might be speedily married to the Dauphin Francis. She must be made sure of being the queen of France, and then the Guises would have the kingdom under their sway. Even Catherine de Medici yielded, and the nuptial arrangements were made on a grand scale. The occasion was to give the duke a new triumph over all the Montmorencies, for he acted craftily in order to obtain the charge of Grand-Master of France.* Woe then to the constable and his nephews! The Protestant nobles shook their heads, but smothered their wrath and put on a good face at the brilliant wedding.

Here we meet with Jeanne, the only surviving child of Henry d'Albret and Margaret of Navarre, now in her thirtieth year. She had grown up a Protestant in principle, and yet, as her mother had remained, she formally adhered to the Roman Church. Self-possessed, attractive, frank, ready in speech, decided in will, highly educated, well versed in public affairs, so liberal that her mother often lectured her for draining her purse, so patriotic that she felt proud of the little kingdom of Navarre, and so heroic in her nature that the stately and romantic were apparent, it is no wonder that princely rivals sued for her hand. At the wedding of Francis and Mary of Scots, she saw the Duke of Guise, whose wealth and pretensions and all royal endorsements had failed to commend him as a suitor; but she did not see the old Baron Montmorency, who had carried her in his arms to the altar, where she refused her pledge to be the wife of the Duke of Cleves. All that formality was set aside by the pope, and now she was the wife

* D'Auvigny, Vie de Guise; Lacratelle.

of Anthony Bourbon, whom she was finding to be utterly worthless and dissipated. She was now queen of Navarre. In her little realm she had done much to circulate the Bible, sustain true preachers and promote a reform after her mother's pattern. Hence she and her husband were reckoned among the Protestant princes, and were under the suspicions of King Henry. In part for their own relief they had come to the wedding; hoping also to do something that might lessen the dominant power of the Guises.*

Near the University of Paris there was an open space of ground called the *Pré aux Clercs.* It was the students' promenade.† On this the Calvinists began to meet when the evenings were pleasant. They walked, conversed, sang and listened to kindly words from their pastors. "When princes wed, Protestants may worship," said one to another, while the gay festivities were proceeding at the court.

"Be cautious," was the reply of the fearful, "or we shall have another Saint Jacques affair."

"Not while the king and queen of Navarre are at the palace," replied the faithful. Soon it was whispered that these royal personages would appear on the commons. The word went abroad; a vast crowd gathered, some report it five thousand. All sang their favourite Psalms, from the version of Clement Marot, to the popular airs of the day. It was like the singing of the Marseillaise in other times. The king and queen of Navarre came, followed by a train of gentlemen‡ and ladies. His favourite Psalm was, "Judge and avenge my cause, O Lord," and he had good reason to sing it as a solemn prayer. Amid so much music party spirit was calmed; people almost forgot whether they

* Colquhoun, Life of Jeanne d'Albret; Freer, Life of Jeanne d'Albret.

† "Le rendezvous des oisifs de Paris."—*Puaux.*

‡ Gentils-homme, a then new term for the nobles.

were orthodox or heretic; it was a grand hour of joy. There was scarcely a more interesting scene in the entire history of the French Reform. A wild, wandering poet, living by his wits, and revealing his genius by some bright lines, had made the voice of song a tremendous power in the land. He had supplied a great want. The Psalms came to be sung in cottage and palace, by the mother at the cradle, by the old man at the gate of heaven; by the Huguenots entering into towns as conquerors, and by the Hollanders as they broke into cathedrals and hurled the idols to the ground. One glorious hymn of praise was now breaking upon the ears of the Sorbonnists, and none of them went forth to raise a mob. The citizens, young and old, of all ranks, heard of the singing processions, left their homes, ran to the spot and climbed the trees, listening with a delight that was dangerous to Romanism. It is said that these processions were formed on several evenings, nor did the parliament interfere to prevent them.

King Henry had hastened from the wedding to visit his army at Amiens. A messenger bore to him the news of the night-processions, saying that an insurrection had broken out in Paris. He could not believe it; the noble character of many of the persons forbade such a conclusion. He did not dare to employ violent measures, for half the nobility were in favour of the new opinions. His ardour of persecution was restrained. He did nothing more than to order his parliament to make inquiries, arrest some and threaten all with death who should persist in such conduct.* But the Cardinal of Lorraine, as chief inquisitor, looked about for a noble victim. Where was the lord of Andelot?

After the taking of Calais he went to his estates in Brit-

* "Several persons were arrested on this occasion. So many edicts have been published, accompanied by severe threats, that the affair has dropped."—*Calvin's Letters*, div.

tany. Henry kept track of him, not only as a valiant officer, but as a suspected heretic. In the baggage of some six hundred gentlemen, who had escaped with bare life at Saint Quentin, certain forbidden books were found, and the Spaniards were not slow in reporting to the French king that "the pestilence" was rapidly spreading among his nobles. On this point Herod and Pilate were friends. The evidence was particularly strong against Andelot. This was not all. He had engaged the services of Gaspar Carmel, who had married the niece of William Farel, and preached to the church in Paris until his life was in peril. He had begun the work of Reform in a province more neglected than any other. Carmel preached in his house, visited the towns and soon saw ten Reformed churches in Brittany, with pastors from Geneva. It was the first example of what could be done by missionaries under the patronage of the nobility. Reports went to the king. Andelot must receive attention.

The black eye of the Spaniard was upon him. Here begins the long series of Spanish intrigues in France (1558) which so greatly affected Protestantism. Philip was the grand manager; the Guises were the tools. He wisely chose his agents. One was his cousin, the Duchess Christerne of Lorraine, who had sharply spied out the ground. The other was Antony Perrenot, best known as Cardinal Granvelle, the tyrant of the Netherlands. Wary, crafty and ambitious, he knew how to handle the Guises, whom he met at Perronne. "From this central point," says Motley, "commenced the weaving of that widespread scheme, in which the fate of millions was to be involved." After a first course of cajoleries, Granvelle brought on the substantials, and said to the Guises: "What a special providence is the captivity of Montmorency and Coligny! So Philip regards it. They are out of the way, and you

have in your hands the destiny of France—yes, of all Europe. . . . The war between Henry and Philip must be closed. Then the two monarchs can unite heart and hand for the extirpation of heresy. It must be rooted out of France and Flanders."

The vain Guises were delighted with the programme. The duke was to war away, while the cardinal nurtured the olive branches. The understanding was to be a profound secret. The crusade must have no Peter the Hermit to preach it. Thus was laid the first great plot against the French Protestants.

But there was one representative of Montmorency and the Chatillons still at large. Granvelle said: "You must utterly crush those rivals. The royal graces have been quite too plentiful toward the Colignys. Strike at the source; destroy the credit of Andelot with the king."

"Throw terror into the nobility," said Christerne, "by having him made an example; him the first of the nobles who has professed the heresy. He will lead the gentlemen of war into it."

"I hear that he dogmatizes about the mass."

"And those books found at St. Quentin—"

"Ah! more than that," said Granvelle, gossipping out the frightful secret. "Only the other day his letters were intercepted on the road to his brother, and they leave not a doubt of his heresy. I tell you, I will not make overtures of peace with the consent of my master unless this matter is taken in hand. But it must be a secret. Your zeal for our Catholic religion is the pledge for that."

The ruin of Andelot was thus plotted.* These Spanish suggestions were borne to the king. "I am glad," said he,

* "La perte de D'Andelot fut résolue." Perau, Vie D'Andelot; D'Auvigny, Vie de Cardinal de Lorraine; a fine historical essay upon the events of the period.

"that my royal brother of Spain is so perfectly aware that the errors of Calvin are spreading among the nobles of France."

"Andelot is pointed out as having blasphemed publicly against the mass," said the Cardinal of Lorraine.

The king was exceedingly touched at the mention of this name, which he had once so ardently loved. "Can it be," he asked, "that he has grown so bold and so impious?"

"Try him. You know how frank and honest he is." The wily cardinal hoped to bring Andelot into the net, where the king would have his own ears filled with the evidence, and then the doom of the heretic would be sealed.

"Let us be gentle," said Henry. "Give him a chance to creep out of the difficulty. Let him evade or deny Granvelle's charges, and then we can proceed with the treaty." Even a persecutor may have a heart for a once familiar friend.

The plan was arranged. Andelot was invited to the court by his brother Odet and his cousin Francis Montmorency. They told him all that the king had said upon the subject of his heresy. He was too acute to be blinded, too honest to conceal his views, too brave to shrink from the consequences. "If you simply deny that you are a Lutheran or Calvinist, the king will be content," was their counsel.

"I shall say just what I mean," he replied. "I must respect myself and honour my conscience." His brother and his cousin trembled for him because they were in sympathy with his opinions. They knew that he had openly set at naught the edicts against "heretics," but they also knew that Henry sought to let him escape through some narrow evasion. Their advice was: "You are to dine with the king. For your life's sake be careful what you say. You will not be asked to declaim against the errors of the

Church. Only admit that the Catholic Church is the true and ancient one, meaning what you will by *catholic*—of Rome say nothing."

Andelot was ushered into the royal palace, where the Cardinal of Lorraine was waiting to see whether king or noble knew most of theology. The chords of the old friendship were retuned in the table-talk. Henry spoke of the soldier's merits and the honours bestowed upon him, and then said: "I learn that you have given your mind to these new doctrines which are rending in twain the Church. I could not believe it at first—and—indeed—really—"

"Sir, you need not hesitate," replied Andelot; "your exceeding bounty toward me requires every service that I can render you. I am as ready as ever to devote my sword, fortune and life to the royal cause. But when I have done my duty to your majesty, do not take it amiss if I spend the rest of my time in working out my salvation."

"Your loyalty is not in question; it is your doctrine."

"That, sir, which I have had preached is the pure word of God. It was approved by the ancient Church and by our forefathers."

"You were at the *Pré aux Clercs*, so I am told?"

"I was not there; but had I been I should not think that I had acted against God or your majesty. For I learn that nothing was there done but to sing David's Psalms, and pray God for the welfare of yourself and your kingdom."

"You have sent some Genevan books to your brother—forbidden books."

"I have, sir—such books as cheered me in my prison at Milan. I thought it very proper to send them to comfort the admiral under the tediousness of his captivity, which he suffers for your majesty's sake."

"What of the mass?"

"I confess that I have not heard mass for a long time, but I did not absent myself from churches and chapels except for good reasons which you would approve if you should consider them; for one was, I was often wholly engaged in your service. If this be an error—"

The Cardinal of Lorraine saw that the king was quite baffled, and he took up the matter, saying, "My good sir, think upon what you have said; you are in a bad case."

"My lord cardinal," replied Andelot, "I am well satisfied with my doctrine, and you know better than you talk. I appeal to your conscience if you have not favoured that same holy doctrine; but the honours of this life have quite changed your mind, and you are now a persecutor of those who hold what you know to be true." This thrust was enough to make Lorraine cautious. It was quite certain that he had pretended to favour the Lutheran Confession of Augsburg, and he had caused some to think that only his love of benefices had kept him within the Roman pale.

"But I did not give you this badge of knighthood to use it thus," said the king, pointing to Andelot's collar. "You then promised and swore to go to mass and to follow your religion."

"I did not then know what it was to be a Christian, and I would not have accepted it on that condition had God touched my heart as he has since."

"Tell me, then, what you think of the sacrifice of the mass?"

"I regard it as a gross impiety—a horrible profanation."

At this the angry king started up from the table, seizing a plate, as if to hurl it at the man on whom he had lavished such pretended affection. He held it poised for a moment, and then, like a child that dare not give full vent to his wrath, he dashed it down with such violence that one of the

fragments wounded his son Francis, the dauphin, who was sitting at the table.

"Begone!" said the angry king, grasping his sword. And the brave Andelot went; not far, however, for he was arrested near the palace.*

The same day on which Andelot was arrested his commission of colonel-general was taken from him, and he was sent to the prison of the Bishop of Meaux, a sort of ecclesiastical jail. He was liable at any hour to be given over into the hands of inquisitors and tortured until his answers would satisfy his judges. Certain zealots urged the king to burn him as a heretic. On coming to more sober thoughts, Henry saw the folly of such extreme measures, and wrote to the veteran Montmorency an account of the provocation which he had received from his kinsman, entreating him to be at ease, for that all was pardoned.

Andelot soon learned the nature of the pardon. It was simply a change of prisons. He was removed from the grasp of Lorraine's inquisitors and escorted by ten archers to the more comfortable castle of Melun. Soon after reaching the castle, his wife and his brother Odet entreated him to confess his fault and apologize to the king. His wife's health required him to retire with her to his estates. But he was unyielding. Others plied him with their Jesuitry, and a doctor of Paris was promised him.

"I have news," he wrote to the church of Paris. "It is, that to-morrow will arrive the doctor they wish to send me. I pray that God will put into my mouth wherewith to answer always for his glory. . . . Christ will be magnified in my body, either by life or death; for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain, by means of whose grace I hope to make known to those who shall ask an account of my faith that I fear God and honour my king, as I have been com-

* The above details in Perau, Laval and Puaux.

manded. . . . As to the things of the soul and the peace of my conscience, I shall give an account of them, as well as I can, to Him who alone can dispose of them." (1st July, 1558.)

To King Henry he wrote: "If I have done anything which displeases you, Sire, I entreat you, with all humbleness, to pardon me, and to believe that, excepting the case of the obedience which I owe to God and to my conscience, you shall never command me to do anything wherein I shall not promptly and faithfully expose my wealth, my body and my life. And what I ask of you, Sire, is not, thank God! from fear of death, and still less from a desire of recovering my liberty; for I hold nothing so dear that I would not willingly abandon it for the salvation of my soul and the glory of my God; but, nevertheless, the perplexity in which I am, in wishing to satisfy you and perform the service which I owe you, and not be able to do it with a safe conscience, oppresses my heart, so that to ease my mind I have been forced to address you this humble petition." (July, 1558.)*

This treatment of such a nobleman made a great noise. Pope Paul IV. was kept fully informed of the progress of the affair from the beginning. He was delighted; he extolled the king's piety and self-sacrifice! and kindling with his theme, as if he already snuffed the fumes of an approaching holocaust, he exclaimed, "What is fitting on such an occasion but to leap on the neck of the criminal and to burn him alive on the spot!"

"It is out of the question," replied the French ambassador, "to treat a Chatillon in such a way, especially the nephew of the constable and the brother of the admiral."

"A heretic never repents," answered the pope; "it is an evil for which there is no remedy but the fire."† This was

* Bonnet's Notes to Calvin's Letters. † Perau, Smedley.

a high compliment to the firmness of the Protestants in the truth of God.

In other distant quarters there was a deep sympathy for Andelot. At Geneva, Calvin wrote, "The details we have learned, not by hearsay, but from his own letters. Whatever be the result, he has so well learned the lesson of renouncing everything which might turn him aside from the right path that all his relations and even his wife have given over tormenting him. . . . Now, that the threats have been redoubled, and he has been informed that it has been decided to shut him up all the rest of his life, you will see, by his letters, what a befitting frame of mind God has bestowed upon him." Calvin wrote to him giving advice and encouragement.* He was also visited by the ministers of Paris, who had baptized his little daughter, born a few days after he had been thrust into the castle.

At length his relatives brought all their pleas to bear upon his mind, and the king's confessor, a doctor of the Sorbonne, came to wind himself into the confidence of the prisoner and sap that firmness which had repelled every open attack. He was so wrought upon that he finally yielded in a moment of weakness and consented to write a letter of submission to the king. The letter does not betray a crouching spirit, nor anything like a recantation, although the high tone of courage is reduced, as the reader may see: "Sire, I have received singular pleasure from the company of Dr.Ruslé, whom I have detained two days, both to be instructed and to give him some slight explanation of my faith and religion, which I should be sorry were such as some have perhaps been inclined to believe. I very humbly beg your majesty to favour me by giving him a patient hearing, and I trust in God that, after his report, you will not remain dissatisfied with me, for some part of it will

* Calvin's Letters, ccccxcvii., diii., div.

give you satisfaction. I shall inform your majesty that I will obey you, as God commands me and the duty of your very humble and obliged servant requires." (7th July, 1558.)

This was quite ambiguous; it could be easily interpreted to please the king, and yet Andelot could claim that he had qualified all his concessions. It was not, however, worthy of him, who had all along been so free from double-meaning phrases. The king was not quite satisfied.

But the following winter months brought about the release of Montmorency, who interceded boldly for his nephew. Wife, uncle and the Jesuits were too much both for king and captive. At last Henry gave the condition of release, by saying:

"Let him hear mass in his cell." Andelot consented to simply hear mass, but he took no part in the service. The doors were opened; he was set free, but he never ceased to reproach himself for what he had thus permitted. Beza says, "He always condemned the act, even till death, and amended it by all the means which it is possible to desire."

The tidings of Andelot's error was soon known throughout the church of Paris. "Alas!" wrote one of the pastors to Calvin, "shall he in whom we triumphed fall off, that God may humble us in every manner?" Calvin wrote him a letter, which might well lead him to repentance. The young minister, Francis Morel, sent better news to Geneva at the close of the year: "Admonished by our brother Gaspard (Carmel), he did not long defend his course, but sorrowing ingenuously confessed it, and said that he would henceforth strive openly to worship God."

CHAPTER V.

COURAGE IN HIGH PLACES.

(1558, 1559.)

THE Admiral Coligny had been near the brink of the grave while sick in a Flemish castle. Scarcely had he recovered when he asked for a Bible, and he gave himself wholly up to its study for many weeks. The letters of his brother had not all been intercepted by the agents of Granvelle. The terrible affair of St Jacques, the imprisonment of the noble ladies of the court, the martyrdoms and the inquisition of the Cardinal of Lorraine were reported to him. But all this did not blunt his taste for the new doctrines.*

Andelot sent him religious books and opened the way for a correspondence with Calvin. "I shall not employ any long exhortations," wrote the Genevan Reformer, "to confirm you in patience, because I am of opinion, nay, I have heard, that our heavenly Father has so fortified you by the power of his Spirit that I should rather praise him for his kindness than urge you to greater efforts. And, in fact, here it is that true greatness of mind should make itself manifest; viz., in overcoming all our passions in order not only to gain the victory over them, but to offer a true sacrifice of obedience to God. . . . Let me call your attention to one thing more, which is, that in sending this affliction upon you, God has intended to draw you apart and whisper in your ear, so that you would listen to him more atten-

* Perau, Vie de Coligny.

tively. Give good heed to him and make progress in his school." *

The same day Calvin wrote a consoling letter to Madame de Coligny, of whom a historian of those times relates: "This lady had always been much attached to religion, and possessed of the highest constancy in supporting her own afflictions and those of her husband. Among other virtues and gifts of mind which rendered her commendable, the care which she took of the poor and the sick and her alms were singularly praiseworthy."

The aged Montmorency, still a prisoner in Flanders, was engaged in drawing up articles of peace. On the third of April, 1559, the treaty of peace was effected at Cateau, near Cambray, and therefore called the peace of Cateau-Cambresis. Philip and Henry were to restore to one another all that each had gained during eight years of war. This paved the way for the release of Admiral Coligny, his uncle and his brother; but the first had still to pay fifty thousand crowns for his liberty. Calvin feared lest he should be asked to declare himself a Romanist as a condition of his release, and he therefore wrote to Madame Coligny: "I entreat you to be prepared to hold out against the alarms that may be got up against you. For, however excellent may be his inclination to dedicate himself to God, I fear whether he will be able to remain unshaken by the murmurs and threats of his uncle [Montmorency, a zealous Catholic], or the solicitation of his brother [Odet]. Reflect also that it is your duty to aid him in taking courage by your example."

Such fears were needless. Coligny paid his ransom and retired to his estates at Chatillon. Weary of the factions at court, unwilling to serve a king whom the Guises ruled, and seriously thinking of abandoning the papal religion,

* Letters of Sept. 4, 1558.

he offered to resign certain important offices. He resigned the government of Paris and the Isle of France in favour of his cousin Francis Montmorency, and earnestly besought the king to name a successor for his government of Picardy. "I wonder at your resolution," was Henry's reply. Others wondered, and began to suspect that "he had changed his religion, for he made it very evident that his mind was altogether drawn off from all coveting of honour and power"—an evidence of religious devotion that might not be amiss in the present century.

By anticipating a little, we follow Coligny to his home. Having leisure in his castle, he gave much of his time to biblical studies. His noble-hearted wife, Charlotte Laval, "was wonderfully given to the Reformed religion," and she assisted him with all earnestness and sympathy. Andelot sometimes came to warn of danger, which he had known, and to derive new strength for coming conflicts. Odet laid his red cap aside and sought to prevent his brother from incurring the royal wrath as Andelot had done. But he received a new knowledge, whose results will be seen at a later day. Henceforth the names of these three men are interwoven with the French Reformation and with the history of France. Sismondi declares that "the court of France had never yet presented a finer combination of bravery, talents and virtues" than was exhibited in the brothers of the noble house of Chatillon. "Odet wore the cardinal's purple, more worthily, perhaps, than it was ever worn in that or any generation." The Abbé Perau declares, with other writers, that the Coligny brothers were the first noblemen of the court who embraced Calvinism. "The capacity of the three brothers, their high degree of intelligence, their alliances, their offices and the extent of their correspondence soon rendered formidable to the court

the party which they organized in the state."* But it will be interesting to trace the steps by which the admiral was led to make the public avowal of his new faith. It was his heroic wife who conquered his timidity.

"How wonderful!" said Madame Charlotte to her husband, on an evening when they were gazing from the castle tower and admiring the glory of God revealed in the starry heavens—"how wonderful that you and Monsieur Andelot should have been blest in your captivity with a knowledge of the truth! And now why do you not publicly avow your faith as he has done, and have a chaplain with us, preaching in the castle and in the towns about us?"

"Perhaps I should quail as he has done, if I were thrown into prison and beset with temptations and the tears of his wife. I might not hold out through all the siege."

Madame Charlotte would not prove the tempter in such a case. "Think," she said, "your wife would never entreat you with tears to submit at the expense of your faith and your honour."

"Do you believe it? Would you encourage me to remain firm, whatever might happen?"

"Indeed I would; for though the trial of seeing you in prison for your faith would crush me, yet I would be crushed to nothing a thousand times rather than have you deny Christ."

"This has been the last cable which has held me to the Roman Church. I have feared the trials that I might bring upon your path, while I have not been regardless of those which I might be called to endure. It is wise to count the cost of being a true Christian—"

"It is wiser to count the cost of not being a true Christian. In the one case the cost is temporal, in the other it

* Anquetil, L'Esprit de la Ligue. In the details given below I follow the *Vita Colinii*, Brantome, Courtiltz and Perau.

is eternal; in the one the body pays it, but in the other the soul pays it for ever."

"You are right," replied the admiral, whose old habit of slow speaking was not broken by his wife's lively and rapid speech; "but allow me a little time to explain. I have wondered at the courage of those who could avow themselves Protestants in the face of tortures and death by fire. To face the cannon's mouth is nothing to that! For what are the chances of escape? I know of no Protestants who have not been severely punished by the laws of France. Whoever makes a public profession of his faith is likely to be seized, burned and his property confiscated to the king. If he undertake secretly to cherish the living word of God he is suspected; whispers reach the ear of parliament, and he is treated with extreme rigour. But if I were alone in the world, all this would not alarm me. I have thought of you and our children. Yet, if you are so prepared with faith and courage that you can undergo what is common to others, you shall see that I will not be wanting in my duty."

Even her tears did not prevent Madame Coligny from making a prompt reply: "The condition of true Christians is not different from what it always has been and may always be. Our Lord foresaw it when he told us to 'fear not them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.' You cannot refuse to be, at least, a secret follower of Christ; but you cannot safely be a hidden disciple, for if you are ashamed of him before men, he will deny you before his heavenly Father and the holy angels. Nor will you be safe even from violent men; they will suspect you, and drag you from your castle and put you to the rack, and, if possible, treat you more cruelly than if you were known to all the world as not only a disciple, but a leader among the Protestants."

"Enough, madame. It was only for your sake that I

had thought of these terrors; as for myself, I have dwelt upon the joys of religion. What delight to have a family altar, a chaplain in our castle, a church growing up in our town, a gospel preached to the poor, and an open fellowship with Madame Renée just up at Montargis,* or happy visits between us and the house of Navarre."

"And the joys beyond all these! the glories of the eternal heavens!" exclaimed Madame Charlotte, with her eyes fixed upon the stars of midnight. There was silence; the clock struck, and the tower was left to its loneliness.

The visitors who next came to the castle to congratulate the hero of Saint Quentin upon his release from captivity were not a little surprised to hear him openly profess the Reformed creed. He told them of a deliverance from another bondage and of a new liberty. A thorough reform had taken place in his house. He gave the Scriptures to his servants, and exhorted them to follow his example. He forbade all profane swearing among them, and gave them a higher idea of life. He engaged pious teachers for his children, and established schools among the poor. He began to attend the meetings held by the Protestants, but did not yet partake of the Lord's Supper, for he still had

* To the Duchess of Ferrara, Calvin had written: "I hear that you are not without thorns in your own house. But still you must overcome that evil with the rest." Her husband died October 3d, 1559, leaving certain Italian estates to her, "so long as she should live as a good Catholic." But she might have a home at Montargis, near Chatillon, and there live as a good Protestant, which she preferred to do. No golden chain could bind her to an Italy of persecution. Her son succeeded to the duchy, and compelled her to choose between a change of religion or a departure from Ferrara. She left for France, a fact greatly lamented by the people, who for thirty years had loved her for her mental vivacity, her graceful manners, her unequalled liberality and her calm Christian character.—*Muratori; Memorials of Renée of France.*

some doubts whether the bread and the wine were not, in some sense, changed into the body and blood of Christ. It was a subject which he often discussed with learned ministers, but his questions had not yet been fully answered to his satisfaction.

One day, being at Vatteville, listening to the Word of God, the truth began to break clearly upon his mind. When the Lord's Supper was about to be celebrated, he rose and said, "I beseech the congregation not to take offence at my weakness, but to believe me sincere and pray for me when I ask the minister to explain the Lord's Supper a little more fully." All were astonished.

"The words of Augustine will relieve the mind of our friend," said the preacher. "They are to this effect: 'To eat that bread which does not perish, but which gives life, is to believe in Christ. To believe is to eat,' and this faith qualifies one to take this bread and wine. They remain unchanged, but the believer receives Christ, when he properly receives them."

"Permit me, brethren, to return thanks to God for this instruction," said the admiral, "and to the pastor, who has so patiently given it. I now see that true preparation for the supper is not in a change in the elements used, but in the person using them; he must have faith in Christ. God sparing me, I shall seek to receive the communion on the first day, hereafter when it is administered in my parish."

"Why not now?" inquired the pastor.

"I have not made so public a profession of my faith as I ought."

"You are making it now. Do you now profess to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only Saviour and Intercessor for fallen man? Do you agree with us in the doctrines which the Scriptures teach, so far as you know them?"

"Most sincerely I do," replied the admiral, moved with deep feeling, to which the audience responded with sighs and tears.

"Then in the name of my Lord, and of my brethren, I invite you to this table, unless the elders think that our usual rules should be strictly observed."

"By no means let us debar the Lord's chosen disciple, for it is the Lord's table," said a venerable elder, who spoke the mind of his brethren. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

The admiral and Charlotte Coligny were among the happiest of the joyful band who then remembered the Lord Jesus in this legacy of his dying love. The scene was almost heavenly; the effect of it was powerful and extended. The villagers would never forget it. The report of it spread throughout France. The old "Mémoires," which have supplied the materials for our description, say, "it is impossible to describe the joy and consolation which all the churches thence received."

From the same "Mémoires" we learn something of "the daily order of his house," which will serve as a specimen of what became usual in the families of the nobility in those times. Indeed among the earnest Christians of that day there was a family worship, more lengthy, formal and solemn than is now often to be found. Perhaps in our haste and brevity we are apt to make ours a mere formality. Theirs was a service, as the habits of Coligny will show. "As soon as he left his bed, which in general was very early in the morning, and had wrapt his gown around him, he knelt down with his household and made a prayer after the form of the French Huguenot churches; after which, while he was waiting for the preachment, which took place every other day with psalm-singing, he gave audience to the deputies of the churches that were sent to

him, or he employed himself in public matters. Sometimes he did business after the sermon until the dinner-hour.

"When dinner was ready, his household servants, except the cooks and waiters, stood in the great hall. Then, standing at the table, with his wife at his side, he observed worship. If there had been no sermon that morning, a psalm was sung; then a benediction was pronounced. Of this an infinity, not only of Frenchmen, but of German captains and colonels, can bear witness that he kept this observance, without omitting it a single day, not only in his own house, but also when with the army. The cloth having been removed after dinner, he rose with his family and attendants, and either returned thanks himself or had his chaplain do so. The same thing was observed at supper. As some of his household could not well be present at the evening prayer, he ordered them all to appear in the great hall after supper; there they engaged in psalms and prayers. At such times he often summoned all his tenants, told them that he would have to render to God an account of his own life, of his care over them and of their conduct; and reconciled them together if there had happened to be any quarrels among them.

"And it would not be easy to say how many of the French nobility began to establish in their families these devout rules of the admiral, who often exhorted them to the true practice of piety, saying that it was not enough that the father of a family lived holily and religiously, if he did not by his example induce others to follow the same rule. . . . Of wine he drank very little; he ate sparingly and slept, at most, but seven hours." Such were some of the customs of "the greatest layman of the French Reformation." And yet this is the man whom prejudice has often represented as ambitious of power, restless in peace, anxious for war, and fomenting discord and rebellion. The

slanderous sentence, first uttered by an enemy, has been handed down from one to another, that his greatest exploits were against his God, his king and his country. The facts will prove that he was godly, loyal and patriotic. His enemies prove it; for his kind of piety was a crime in their eyes, and Protestantism an intolerable rebellion against Rome. But we need not plead; our task is to narrate.

While Coligny was furnishing to the nobility a model of family government, a few Protestant pastors were setting before the world the model of an ecclesiastical court. It was a bold step for even bold men, during those stormy days. It was held shortly after the release of Coligny and Andelot, and they may have taken some interest in it, although it was known only to the faithful. In the convening of this first national synod of France, much was due to the energy of a young nobleman who had given all to the Reform.

The lord of La Roche died in his château near Maçon, leaving a fortune to his son Antony, a child of four years. Another son became a captain in the army under Coligny. The family was noble and ancient. The young son was taken to Paris and placed in charge of a teacher, who let fall into his heart the seeds of a holy truth. These grew rapidly when the lad went to study law at Toulouse, into which Calvin and his friends had borne the Gospel. He talked with the Protestant students; his mind was not at rest; he must see and hear the Reformers at Geneva. Thither he went, and was confirmed in the faith. De Thou describes him as a youth "in whom nobility of birth, comeliness of face, learning, eloquence and a singular modesty vied with each other."

On his return to Paris he cast in his lot with the Protestant church, then under the care of Francis Morel, the lord of Colonges, by whom he was persuaded to give up the law

and study theology. It is not a little singular that this church had so many pastors who were young noblemen; perhaps the hope was to ensure it more favour with the court. It was soon to have another. This flock called Antony Chandieu to the ministry, at the age of twenty years. He was probably in the St. Jacques affair; and this may have prompted him to take up his pen in defence of the nightly assemblies of the Protestants for the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Had not the Lord himself instituted it by night, surrounded by enemies? The tract fell into the hands of the priests. Chandieu was thrown into prison for heresy. When the King and Queen of Navarre came to court they set him free, that he too might sing the Psalms of David on the commons, if he chose. He visited Geneva. During the troubles in Paris, Calvin wrote to the church there: "We have chosen from among our colleagues the fittest for this mission. Meanwhile avail yourselves of what God grants you; besides, our excellent brother M. de la Roche [Chandieu] has promised to return soon and labour among you as valiantly as ever."*

At this point a lively pen has portrayed him as "the ardent minister, made spare by his vigils, with brown hair, eyes aflame, short chin, sallow face, eloquent lips, a military bearing, and full of that Christian faith which produced pastors courageous and powerful among the people. The aide-de-camp of Calvin and Beza, he fitly represented the Reformation." Another calls him, "one of the most illustrious ministers and devout actors of the terrible drama called the Reform. Braving the cruel edicts, he came to Paris."†

Chandieu had the talent for organizing more perfectly

* Calvin's Letters, cccclxxxvi.

† Thuani Historia, lib. xxix.; Lacratelle, Balzac, and the Biographie Universelle.

the elements of the Protestant Church in France. He went into Poitiers, where the fruits of Calvin's early labours were abundant, and had a conference with the faithful. The Lord's Supper was celebrated. At this reunion of pastors and people, the question arose, How they might better arrange their parishes and promote a more effective discipline? Chandieu threw out certain ideas of organization which struck his brethren with force. "Why not," they asked—"why not have all the churches of France united in one confession of faith and one form of government?"

The idea was to become a fact. Chandieu was empowered to bring about a convention of ministers and elders at Paris. In four months the quiet word went abroad to all the churches. The faithful at the capital prepared to entertain very secretly a goodly number of those who might find a scaffold if they dared to show their faces in the streets. The day came—it was May 25, 1559—but what a disappointment! Only the deputies of ten or twelve churches appeared; the rest found the difficulties so great that they could not safely come. These ten came in the very face of death.*

In the chambers of Parliament noisy debates were raised by fiery persecutors. In some retired room in the suburbs of Saint Germain, then called "little Geneva,"† the persecuted met to frame a constitution for the churches of France. To fully portray the contrast would require a volume. Francis Morel was chosen moderator of this first

* "Spreto certæ necis metu ad urbem conveniunt."—*Thuani Historia,* lib. xxii. These represented the churches of Dieppe, St. Loo, Angiers, Orleans, Tours, Saintes, Poitiers, Marennes, Chatelleranlt, and St. Jean d'Angeli. Laval, Puaux, Quick.

† Sangermanum suburbium quod vulgo parvam Genevam vocabant.—*Thuani Hist.*, lib. xxiii.

national synod. His nobility would have been no shield had he been detected. The discussions were long, warm and fraternal. In four days these men agreed upon a confession of faith, which bound the French churches in unity for more than two centuries. It was the Presbyterian system of doctrine and discipline, and need not here be described. In it the genius of Calvin was manifest, and it perhaps came from his hand. It seems to have been published by Chandieu, but was hardly presented, as some assert, by Coligny to King Henry II. in the name of the synod. An event of this sort belongs to a later day.

That which struck the popular mind was that this synod was held amid fires and gibbets, and just when the clouds were gathering for a terrific storm of wrath. Historians have admired the calm dignity, the serene force, the profound secresy and the moral grandeur of this assembly. The faithful saw the hand of Jehovah guiding his Church. By his Spirit it had been well timed. Had it been attempted at a later day it might have been a failure. Amid deeper, angrier waters the foundations of a glorious Church might not have been laid; the grand light-house might not have risen as an Eddystone tower in the channel of civil wars. There was reason to believe that four hundred thousand people would rejoice in this union, and gradually form a great party eager for the rights of conscience, of faith and of worship. Not that all of them were devoted to piety, but the Protestant churches would draw to them thousands who desired more liberty in their political life. The deputies parted with a grateful song and fervent prayer, and went their way to endure with heroism the baptism of blood and the trial by fire. They gave their confession to the world, and then came the crisis.

Here, then, was a new organization, but did it "add another element of strife to the contest between the two re-

ligions?" What if it did? Expediency does not determine its lawfulness. It was a dangerous policy for the apostles to reconstruct the Church in Jerusalem, but it was their duty. There was no policy that would ensure safety to Chandieu and his brethren, but there was a necessity for them to construct a fold for the beaten and hunted flock of God. And what other form of church government would have proved less offensive? Independency would have exposed them just as much to the violence of their neighbours. Episcopacy would have brought upon their bishops and other clergy a hatred intensified by jealousy and competition. Not as a policy, but as a principle, they chose Presbyterianism. No doubt "the Romish clergy abhorred it as a sign of the increasing power and boldness of the Reformed party, while the statesmen of the day could not but look upon it with suspicion as a sort of *imperium in imperio;*" yet what possible escape would any other system have afforded? Any Protestant form of church organization must have been as liable to be regarded by the papists as "a dangerous rival to the civil power, and savouring of rebellion, inasmuch as it ignored the headship alike of pope and king, acknowledging that of God alone." When one party of the English Protestants ascribed a "headship" to their king they were charged with "rebellion" quite as much as the Puritans. It must have been so in France, unless the king would accept the "headship"—a thing that none could expect—and, even then, Rome would not have lessened her rigours. We can hardly think that "the Reformed Church would have struck deeper root" in France if it had adopted a less republican form of government. Reform in any shape was anti-papal, and therefore intensely hated.

Wise or impolitic, these men asked that one question which gave decision to the men of God in all ages: "Is it

right?" And they were only a few of those champions who were then waging for us the battle of civil and religious liberty. In seeking a Church free from popery, they were, unconsciously, opening the road to a state free from tyranny—a state which people in other lands were to establish. If our admiration of a recent writer is not apparent in some of the preceding lines, we make amends by quoting his compliment to "the history of the chief Calvinistic churches." He affirms that, "In Switzerland and Holland, in England and in North America, wherever this organization has been able to control the political power, a republic has followed. These are, indeed, the parts of the world where liberty flourishes most, and for this noble fruit we may well love the tree that bore it; but in the sixteenth century the tendency of society was toward despotism, not toward self-government; and the statesmen of Europe must be excused if they were not clear-sighted enough to see that the new movement must inevitably succeed, or wise enough to become the leaders and controllers of the popular feelings." *

About four leagues north of Paris was the castle of Ecouen, belonging to Montmorency. King Henry was there in June, 1559, and, hearing of the synod, he put his seal to an edict more terrific than that of Châteaubriand. Death was the penalty upon every "Lutheran" who was convicted, and every one was sure to be if arrested. What state crimes had these miscalled "Lutherans" introduced? None whatever. They had granted more than some men would now concede as to the "first table" of the moral law. In their synod they had declared that God had ordained governments of every sort, and that "He has put

* Henry White, Massacre of St. Bartholomew, London, 1868. This work came fresh to me while I was giving my manuscripts the third revision. Compare Preface to Motley's Dutch Republic.

the sword into the magistrate's hands to repress sins, not only against the second table of God's commandments, but likewise against the first. We must not only endure that the superiors have rule over us, but likewise honour and esteem them. . . . We hold that we must obey their laws, pay all tribute, taxes and dues, and bear the yoke of subjection with a good and free will, even though they should be infidels; provided that the empire of God remain whole. . . . We abhor those who reject superiorities, set up a community of goods, put everything in confusion and overturn the order of justice." * These were the people marked for death.

But first the persecutors almost fell out among themselves. Parliament had established a chamber to take the especial charge of the "Lutherans." It consigned so many to the flames that it won for itself the awful name of "the burning chamber." † It was sufficiently Spanish to treat without mercy all who despised the mass.

A later creation was the *Tournelle*, "a chamber established in each parliament (of France) to judge of crimes and heresies." ‡ Cruel enough, it had nevertheless released so many of the accused that the one in Paris was regarded as a chamber of mercy. It often opened a door of escape that the prisoner might flee to another clime. These two courts were usually at war with each other, but a singular case increased the sharpness between them.

Four students, upright, blameless, but zealous Calvinists, were tried by the lower courts and condemned to death.

* For the history and articles of this synod, see Quick, Synodicon in Gallia Reformata; Thuani Historia; Mémoires de Condé; Laval and Puaux.

† Taillandier, Registres du Parliament. It is also called "La Chambre des Lutherans."

‡ Taillandier.

They appealed to the Tournelle. The president had the young men brought before him. He was eager to annul the horrible sentence, and he warned them to be cautious and reserved in answering his questions. He tried them on several points, and finally asked, "Do you believe that Christ is really present in the Lord's Supper?"

"We believe that Christ is really present in his divine nature;" but as they had been put on their guard, they did not explain the difference between the Romish doctrine of the bodily presence and the Reformed doctrine of the spiritual presence of Christ.

"That is sufficient," said the president, hoping that their release was at hand. The majority of the judges were satisfied. The former sentence would have been reversed if one member had not asked, "Are you willing to assist at mass?"

"We are not," they replied, without hesitation.

"Why not? State your reasons."

The president, seeing that if they explained on the spot they must be utterly lost, said, "You will give your reasons in writing, and may have twenty-four hours to prepare your answer."

The students cared less for their lives than for the truth, and disdained to prevaricate. When the court met again their paper was read. The judges were astonished. It contained one of the strongest protests against the mass. Still, the greater part of the court persevered in mercy. They said, "The law pronounces death against those only who deny the real presence; these young men admit a certain real presence. The former sentence is revoked, but as they have shown disrespect for the mass, they may be banished." They were released, happy in their exile. The public voice loudly condemned this new interpretation of the law. The "burning chamber" was indignant. "Why," said they,

"heresy is no longer a crime; even Calvin might teach his doctrines without fear; magistrates who condemn Protestants to death will be called murderers of the innocent."

King Henry was vexed by this clashing of the courts. He saw the parliament of Paris dividing into three parties; one headed by Le Maitre, and bent upon defending the Roman religion by the old system of persecution; a second led by men who sought to adopt a middle course and to compromise with all parties; a third composed of secret Reformers, who from day to day declared themselves more openly, and sought to ensure liberty to the growing host of Calvinists. The papal clergy took alarm, and others roused the king. "Hang at least half a dozen of the councillors as heretics," was the advice of the Duchess Diana. "Show Philip, so soon to be your brother-in-law, that you are firm in the faith." Did she wish to provide another entertainment at the coming wedding? Lorraine assented, but the Marshal Vieillville flung out his sarcasm: "If you (Henry) are going to play the theologue and inquisitor, then let the cardinal come and teach us how to hold our lances in the tournament."* The Cardinal of Lorraine saw trouble in advance to the rising power of the Guises. He knew that almost all the nobles were opposed to a house founded by his father, who was not a true Frenchman, however he boasted of his descent from Charlemagne. He therefore hastened to direct the royal eye to the breakers lying ahead of his Guisean ship. "Do you soberly think," asked the king, "that this sect, from Geneva will prove so dangerous?"

"Be assured of it," replied the cardinal; "and let me urge that the power of the State be employed for the defence of the Church. If the secular arm fail in its duty, all the malcontents will rush into this detestable sect; they will destroy the power of the Church." . . . .

* Mém. de Vieillville.

"Is not the Church built on the rock of St. Peter? (You see I remember your last sermon.) And what can destroy it?"

"Then, Sire, there is all the more reason to defend what cannot be destroyed? That was the doctrine of my sermon. If this be not done, these miserable sectarians will turn upon you and destroy the regal power. Who knows what the Colignys are hatching in their retirement? Who knows what the Tournelle will next attempt? Verily the wrath of God will rest upon you if you delay."

Henry wished to see with his own eyes and hear with his own ears the state of things in his parliament. He summoned the Wednesday-court,* composed of the presidents and judges of the several courts, and other officers of the crown. They met, and it was soon evident that the old days of unity in hating new doctrines and burning heretics without a protest were passing away. An angry debate arose upon the mercies of the Tournelle, the recent sentences, and the general treatment of heretics. President le Maitre did his utmost to rouse a sweeping tempest against the moderate party and the secret Reformers. The pope never had a more zealous advocate for the inquisition; he would have rooted out the tares with hot pincers, at the risk of withering the wheat, and made parliament solemn over the funerals of its most humane members. When the debate was at the highest pitch of excitement, a sudden interruption drew every eye to the doors.

By a preconcerted plan the king entered; in his train were Montmorency, the Guises, a troop of Guisards and a strong-armed escort. The surprised members were cooled by the rustling robes of their visitors, and gave silence to their king. He informed them that he wished to profit by

* Called Mercuriales, because it was held on Wednesday, the *dies Mercurii.*—*Tallandier, Registres du Parliament.*

their discussions, and ordered them to proceed. Recovering their spirits, they expressed their views freely and clearly. Louis du Faur, a distinguished lawyer, took the side of the Protestants. "The differences in religious opinions are assuredly the cause of the present troubles," said he, "but the first step toward a remedy ought to be an inquiry into the parties. On which side does the chief blame rest? That of the Protestants, or that of the government which persecutes them? Let us search for this, lest the question of the prophet* to the unrighteous Ahab be applied in this instance, 'Art thou he that troublest Israel?'" The king made a note of this bold speech, which opened the way for one bolder still.

Anne du Bourg arose. The gaze of all was fixed upon one of the greatest men of the realm, who saw not yet the glitter of the martyr's crown. He was thirty-eight years of age, of a family honoured in his native Auvergne, and the nephew† of a chancellor of France. He had studied theology, been ordained a priest, then devoted himself to the law, and in 1557 been elected to the parliament of Paris. He was a man of great learning, integrity and human kindness. We must condense his speech. "I thank the king," said he, "for his resolution to probe this question to the core, and to act according to the rules of justice. Of what crimes are these men guilty? Of treason? They never omit the name of the king from their prayers. What revolt have they headed? Ah! they have discovered great vices and scandals in the Roman Church, and petitioned for a reform! They have sought the truth, and I suspect they have found it. . . . Why is the search for truth regarded

* It was Ahab who put this question to the prophet. Du Faur was not the last public man who made an error in his quotations from the Bible.

† Calvin says, "the grandson of the Chancellor du Bourg."

a crime? Why must it be singled out and made the point of attack? There are crying sins, such as blasphemy, perjury and licentiousness, stalking abroad in noonday, unabashed and unpunished; while new and unheard-of penalties are devised against men guilty of no crime but that of raising the lamp of Scripture, to discover by its light the corruptions of Rome. Popes have refused to call a general council to reform the abuses of the Church; kings have been too much occupied in schemes of ambition to attend to spiritual affairs; and a few courageous men have felt compelled to take this great work in hand. They have founded a goodly edifice on the Word of God and the discipline of the early Church. How praiseworthy the enterprise! How great the blessings to be derived from it! And yet Christendom, for the most part, has arrayed itself against this labour of love, by edicts and proscriptions, by terms of punishment and threats of excommunication. They have forgotten that the Father of all truth has freed the soul of man from the sword of the tyrant, and that a well-grounded opinion can never be destroyed except by the superior weight of an opposite opinion more consonant with reason. God forbid that France should persist in following the insane example of Germany! If she do, the land will be fouled by massacre and carnage; defaced by butchery and scaffolds; blackened by the smoke of persecuting flames; and after all these horrors, we shall be eager to retrace every step which we have trodden in blood. . . . . Let me advise the king to employ every effort to call a general council, and if he fail in that attempt, to assemble, in his own realm, the most pious and learned divines, who may confer together and effect a salutary reform. In the mean time, let all suits for religious offences be suspended. It is no light thing to condemn those who confess the name of Jesus Christ with piety in their harmless meetings, with

courage in the face of violence, and with glory in the midst of the flames."

"Rank heresy!" whispered certain persons, who knew that the sentiment would prove them to be loyal. More cautious speeches followed from the moderate party. Then the fiery Le Maitre arose, breathing the spirit of Torquemada, the champion of the Inquisition. He praised the pious energy of Philip the August, who in a single day ordered six hundred Albigenses to be burned in his presence, and furnished the present king with an example worthy of imitation!

The king arose greatly agitated. He thought that the charge of gross crimes was hurled against himself, for conscience was speaking. He conferred with his cardinals; then, leaving the chamber, he ordered Montgomery, the commander of the Scotch guard, to arrest Du Faur and Du Bourg, with six other members, who were at their homes. Three of the nameless six had timely warning and escaped. All the others were thrown into the Bastille, "the abode of broken hearts."

"Hasten forward the proceedings," said Henry, "for I swear that both my eyes shall see Du Bourg burnt at the stake." Nine days after the arrest the trial commenced. He insisted upon being tried before his peers, but the king appointed a commission, declaring that if the prisoner would not plead, he should be regarded as already condemned. He protested, but the trial went on. Questions were asked him concerning his faith, and his answers were so sound that he was pronounced a heretic. Short would have been the work of death, but for one event, which will be related in the next chapter. There were two things that King Henry could do at the same time: order the burning of heretics and engage in scenes of revelry. If he had attended only to the first, he might have prolonged his

own life; if he had given himself wholly to the second, the life of Du Bourg might not have been in jeopardy. In two days more Henry would be struggling with death.

The prisoner in the Bastille kept his soul free from the tyranny of man, delighted in the word of God, held fellowship with the once crucified Lord, prepared himself for the worst that man could do, and waited for that higher liberty which no one fully knows until he enters heaven. Thus he made his captivity blessed.*

* Thuani, Historia; Lacratelle; Biographie Universelle.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GUISES IN POWER.

(1558–1559.)

COLIGNY and William of Orange had fought against each other in Picardy, not foreseeing the warm friendship that would some time bind them together in one great cause. William had been the secret negotiator with Montmorency in the treaty of peace at Cateau. He was one of the hostages selected by Henry II. to ensure the keeping of the peace. While in France he made the singular discovery which was to colour his life. He was one day hunting with the king in the forest of Vincennes when they found themselves separated from all other company. Henry was thinking of a secret article of the treaty, by which he bound himself to make the uprooting of heresy his chief business. This would commend him to Philip's heart and brotherhood. Spanish love called for Christian blood in matters of religion.

"Your majesty's mind seems not to be so cheerful as usual," said William, as their horses' heads were turned together.

"There is enough to make me solemn," replied Henry, who imagined that William was a party to all Philip's secret plots, "for the sectaries increase daily in my kingdom. Even the nobles are fast going over to the new doctrines. Like fire, the more they are beaten, the more they spread. I shall never be easy until the land is swept clear of these accursed vermin. I expect every day to hear of a revolt of the nobles, under the name of a Reform; but yet,

with the favour of Heaven and the aid of my son and brother Philip, I hope soon to master the rebels." We recall the conversations between Lorraine and Granvelle.

This was all news to young Orange, but he kept his astonishment to himself. The king then proceeded to lay before his discreet friend the particulars of a plot, and the manner in which all heretics were to be discovered and put to death by a wholesale massacre. Philip was to use his army in making a clean sweep in the Netherlands, while Henry was to enlist the Roman Catholics for the secret work of extermination in France. The face of Prince William betrayed none of the indignation pent up in his soul, and he won thereby the name of "the Silent." Henry had blundered; he had revealed a secret of great value to the man who was to defeat the plot in his own country, and finally to liberate his people from the double tyranny of Spain and Rome. We have noticed this to show that the plan of a great massacre was not a new invention in 1572; it was entertained thirteen years earlier. Henry designed to make the first attempt; his widow, Catherine, was the soul of the second, and the woman succeeded, but in each instance Philip of Spain was the prompter behind the scene of blood.

Such was the meaning of the secret article in the treaty between the two kings. Philip gave the plan for getting rid of heretics; the price thereof was a wife for the inventor. Henry paid it by pledging his daughter, Elizabeth, to Philip II. She was to be delivered to the Spanish committee in Paris, and when the time came the affairs of Du Bourg were attracting attention. The Cardinal of Lorraine suggested that the most agreeable exhibition to offer to these Spanish gentlemen would be the burning of half a dozen councillors on the public square. "We must give," said he, "this junket to these grandees of Spain!"

"The judges will have them ready," thought the king, "by the time that the wedding festivities are ended." Even now he was ordering an expedition to march and sweep heresy out of one of the provinces.

This wedding was made splendid in honour of the late peace. The Duke of Alva acted as proxy for Philip. Among other revelries was the tournament, of which Henry was excessively fond. Not one was held at the court in which he did not "don his helm and break his lance." A few days after he had sworn that he would see Du Bourg burnt at the stake he was mounted on a war horse and running in the lists with the bravest knights of the time. The tournament was held in front of the Bastille, where lay the men on whom he sought to have vengeance.

The king was urged to retire amid the universal applause, but seeing two lances yet unbroken, he seized one of them and ordered the other to be given to Gabriel Montgomery, the grandson of a Scotsman, a Protestant worthy of fame, and the commander of the Scotch guards. Many a Caledonian family had settled in France: this name was one of the noblest. Thrice the honour was declined by Montgomery. He begged to be excused.

"We entreat your majesty to retire," said the queen and the court ladies.

"Not while there remains a lance to break," replied Henry, and then, springing forward, he put the Scot on the defensive. The two men came together with so rude a shock that the shaft of Montgomery broke upon the king's vizor. A splinter entered his eye, piercing so deeply that he was carried from the lists unconscious of the lamentations which filled the air. Some writers give a report, then current, that when conveyed to the palace, he looked back at the Bastille, and said, "I fear that I have wronged the innocent councillors shut up within those walls."

"That thought is suggested by the tempter," whispered the Cardinal of Lorraine, according to the report. "Be watchful unto the end; persevere in the faith." This wily prelate was capable of thus drying up the healing waters of charity, and keeping the heart of a dying king burning with revenge. But the king, probably, spoke not a word after he was struck. He died the next month, July, in the very hall decorated for the wedding.

No doubt some of the Protestants gave thanks to God for the removal of their persecutor the king, who was struck down at the very time when he was giving orders for a wholesale slaughter of the Protestants, and proposing a crusade against Geneva, which Alva called "the sink of corruption." History has severely judged him. "Of this weak and worthless prince, all that his flatterers could favourably urge was his great fondness for war, as if a sanguinary propensity, even when accompanied by a spark of military talent, were of itself a virtue. Yet with his death the kingdom fell even into more pernicious hands, and the fate of Christendom grew darker than ever." * Days were coming when the Protestants, chased, cornered and crushed for a long period of woe, would look back and wish that the days of Henry had been prolonged. A bad ruler is sometimes made popular by having a far worse successor.

The Protestants could not fail to notice that death entered through one of the eyes which he had sworn should look upon Du Bourg at the stake, and by the lance of the very man employed to arrest the councillors. They saw in it the judgment of God. Was it not strange also that the royal corpse was covered with a rich tapestry into which was woven the picture of Saul smitten down on the way to Damascus, and bearing the words, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" It was not intentional; the mistake was

* Motley, Dutch Republic.

seen and the tapestry was removed, but not until the rumour had got wing, so that all France whispered it, and many thought it a providential rebuke upon a king who had fiercily persecuted the saints of God.*

Francis II. ascended the throne for a short but eventful reign. He was scarcely more than sixteen, delicate in body, feeble in spirit, "without virtues or vices," and as little the master of himself as he was king of the realm. His wife, Mary of Scots, might have illustrated her powerful talents had not a Medici been in her way, or the Guises aimed to make their niece the means of their own selfish advancement. One of these crafty uncles lost not a moment, working himself and brother into power, as if king, queen, court, army, government and treasury all were their own. "It was a great misfortune for France that the Duke of Guise had such a brother as the cardinal," for otherwise the able warrior might have served nobly his country. "He must sometimes yield to the insolent and scheming prelate, the most dangerous man of his age. The one was named minister of war, the other of the finances."† There was danger that these men would imitate the ancient mayors of the palace and usurp the throne.

While King Henry was lying for a month speechless, hopeless of life, and wished out of the world by the Lorraine faction, the veteran Montmorency saw what was coming. A regency would be wanted, and the right to it rested in the house of Bourbon. He wrote a letter and gave it to a courier, saying: "All haste, and no treachery, at the peril of your life." We follow the messenger over the long ride to the castle of Nerac in Navarre. Antony and his queen break the seals; they read words of this import: "Come

* Thuani Historia; Mémoires de Condé (Discours de la Mort du Henry II.); Biographie Universelle.

† Lacratelle; Mémoires de Castelnau.

post-haste to Paris. The dauphin will soon be king, and the Guises will rule over him if you are not here to take the regency. I can manage Catherine until you come. She will listen to Coligny and keep the cardinal at bay for a little time. She will favour the strongest party; therefore show your strength."

Jeanne d'Albret hailed the summons as one sent by Providence. If Henry must die, it was for the peace of God's chosen ones, to whom she had afforded every protection. What a grand prospect for France! The young king under the guardianship of a prince who aided the Reform! The kingdom freed from Spanish rule and the foreign house of Lorraine abased! But Antony failed to see his opportunity. His feeble soul was appalled. He would lament over lost rights, but he shrank from putting forth a hand to prevent them from being lost. Jeanne heard his excuses, and answered them with eloquence and irony:

"So you will not retrieve your fortunes! Because Philip and Henry* did nothing for you in their treaties, you will do nothing for yourself, even when God opens the way. Very well! Sit here and be the football of kings. Murmur and moan that your rivals grasp what you seek, but remember that if you would put forth an equal energy, you would see them humbled and yourself exalted. Rouse up; you might deliver France."

Antony left his heroic wife and gave ear to other advisers. His favourite bishop was in the interest of the Guises and Spaniards. "It is a trap," said the bishop. "You will lose your kingdom. You may lose your head.

* Navarre had long been an object of contention between Spain and France, and Antony scarcely knew to which it would fall. It was to have been made more free and independent by the treaty of Cateau-Cambresis, but both kings neglected it. It owed an allegiance to France.

Philip of Spain will send an army into Navarre." Antony indulged these gloomy forebodings, and resolved to wait until good fortune should take the pains to come all the way to him. It was quite as well; he would have only the sooner become ensnared in the wiles of his destroyers. It was not for such a prince to arrest the course of the ascending Guises, raise the fallen house of Bourbon, paralyze the iron hand of tyranny and create a mild and just administration. As well expect a reed to stay an avalanche. The mission was grand; it was his right, but he was found wanting. His was the case of a man waiting for the tide, and yet afraid to venture upon it; eager for power, yet unequal to its responsibilities; flattered by hope and mortified by neglect; offered a great occasion, and yet listless to the call of a splendid duty. Whether in Chuch or State such men never cross the Rubicon, never decide at the moment when earth and heaven wait for them, never do anything with all their might.

At length the brave Jeanne made one more effort. His brother Louis made a desperate appeal to Antony's patriotism, and this first prince of the blood consented to go to Paris on condition that Condé, Coligny, a duke or two and the secretary of Montmorency should meet him at Vendôme and be his body-guard to the capital. Note the meeting-place; this appointment will bring thither the Protestant nobles to hold their first political assembly—one almost as big with results to the State as was the synod just held in Paris to the Church.

In the general clearing out of Henry's cabinet the new broom of Lorraine was applied to Montmorency in the following delicate way: "You are worthy of rest. The nation has long had the benefit of your wisdom at the cost of your experience. Much as your counsels would profit us, it would be cruel to draw off your strength to the very dregs.

Like old wine, it should be kept only for choice occasions. The only reward worthy of your great services is repose. We permit you to retire." And he did retire to Chantilly, to drink the bitter waters of a second disgrace.* He, too, would have a word ready for the coming assembly at Vendôme.

Catherine was the regent, and, therefore, the ruler. But as she does not yet appear in her full character, her portrait may be deferred. The real managers were the two older Guises.† Francis put on the airs of a prince, and was often generous. The Cardinal of Lorraine was every sort of a man, according to circumstances. He once was busy in his diocese of Rheims, and he wrote: "I have nothing to write about but prayers and preaching, instructing my little flock, and taking as much pleasure in it as I once did in the cares and toils of the court." But prosperity made him intolerable. Brantome says: "When he was on his high horse, he regarded nobody; when he was low in the world, he courted everybody. He was thought to be a hypocrite in religion, using it to build up his own greatness. I have heard him talk of the Confession of Augsburg, half approving it. At times he almost preached it, to please the Germans." He was better than many others of his rank. He kept no hawks, hounds nor racing-horses. A Venetian said: "He is not much beloved; he is far from truthful, naturally covetous, but *full of religion*." He wore sackcloth and fasted often, said grace at meals and cheated his uncle's creditors. So timid was he that he was attended by an armed guard to the very steps of the altar. Out of his immense income, from more than a dozen benefices, he

* D'Auvigny, Vie de Montmorency; Thuani Historia.

† With the army and treasury in their hands, they had all France under their control. "Not a crown could be spent, or a soldier moved, without their consent."—*Buchanan, Rerum Scot. Hist.*, lib. xvi.

sometimes gave alms to the poor, calling to him the crowd and pompously flinging coins at their feet. When this man had power at court, he advised persecution; when he was in disgrace, he plotted extermination. He was one of the "Spanialized" party.

Lines of suspicion, like a telegraph net-work, were stretched over all the face of the realm, and along them ran whispers of discontent. The nobles and chieftains feared a rebellion—not among the people, not in some remote corner, but in the very palace, and by those who usurped the guardianship of the throne. They knew the Absaloms and the Ahithophels, the Tarquin and the Martel, of their day. There were two classes of malcontents—one, the politicians, who sought more liberty in France, willing to accept such fruits of the revival of letters and religion as would benefit the state. They desired a new order of things, more liberal, more tolerant of free thought, and less fettered by the old, narrow feudalism of the Dark Ages. Still in the Roman Church, they wished it to make converts and advance. In the provinces, they reckoned upon the whole party of Montmorency; in the parliament, they found leaders in such champions of freedom as Du Bourg and President Sequier, who had lately said, in a bold speech in the chamber, "We abhor the establishment of a tribunal of blood, where secret accusation takes the place of proof, and where the accused is denied every natural means of defence. Begin, Sire"—he was addressing King Henry—"begin by giving to the nation an edict which will not cover the kingdom with funeral piles that will be wetted either with the tears or blood of your subjects. At a distance from your presence, Sire, and bowed down with labours in their fields and shops, they know not what is preparing against them. They do not suspect that, at this very hour, a scheme is laid to separate them from you and

deprive them of their natural guardian. As for you, sirs" —he turned to the ministers and councillors of state—" you who hear me so tranquilly, do not suppose that you have no interest in this matter. To-day you are in peace and honour. None attack you. But the higher you climb in power, the nearer you are to the thunderbolt, and one must be a stranger to history not to know what is often the cause of a disgrace. Pass these edicts, and you may soon lose all. The people will rise up against you. Establish an inquisition, and, though you be saints, you may be burned as heretics."*

In the other class were the Protestants, still loyal to the throne, but fearful of the usurpers of power. They began to look to Coligny as their model and leader. The report of his religious establishment at Chatillon was not long in reaching them. Nor was Andelot far outdone by him in winning the good-will of the chieftains. "Two men such as Coligny and Andelot, joined to the Calvinists of France, gave promise of a happy change in their condition. They opened their castles; they entertained a great number of their former comrades in war. Such nobles as the Vidame of Chartres and Count Rochefoucault thought it no harm to visit the Colignys, and there pray to God in French, sing Marot's psalms and evince their zeal for a solemn worship."† About each castle there was a little Geneva. But the frequent convenings there were like the gatherings of the knights of old.

"All I ask of the crown is that the edicts shall secure to us liberty of faith," said Coligny. "I ask no office. The

* Garnier, Histoire de France, tome xiv.; Fleury, Histoire Ecclésiastique. Pierre Sequier, born in 1504, died 1580, holds rank with such liberal, bold thinkers as Budeus, Du Bellay, De Thou, Bishops Montuc and Marillac, who were Protestants in the Roman Church.

† Lacratelle; Colquhoun, Jeanne d'Albret.

country now rests from war; I wish to rest in my home and family, serving God among the people around me."

"But we all need your public services," replied the chieftains more ambitious for political life. "Cannot something induce you to hold office at court?"

"Nothing but the necessities of our common cause. But there is no danger, at present, of my being tempted in that direction." Coligny was not naturally fond of work. The short, slightly-built man, of elegant address, friendly face, low, musical voice and winning smile was now more ready to bring others to his castle and his hospitality than to gird himself, march forth and share with them in the toils of the rough world. Firm in purpose, clear in discernment, quick to see, prompt to judge, and yet slow to speak,* always prudent, never carried away by novelties, nor guilty of using friendship for selfish ends, his reputation for wisdom and safe counsel was soon widely known. The time was coming when a vast amount of work would force itself upon him, and compel him to constant activity. Applications for advice and assistance were pouring in every day. Hundreds of letters must be read and answered every week. A vast correspondence was forming, which reached into every province of France, and into England, Holland and Germany. Longing for peace, he was to live in almost perpetual war.

We approach the time of the civil wars in France. At the outset it should be borne in mind that these fearful dramas were not at first a struggle between Protestantism and Romanism. No greater mistake can be made in history

* Coligny had a habit of thinking with a toothpick in his mouth, which prevented his words from evincing the rapidity of his thought. Brantome gives us the proverb then current, even among the Italians, "God save me from the mind and toothpick of the admiral"—(*animo, et stecco del amiraglio*).

than to make such assertions.* France had a nobility outside of the house of Lorraine, and a people very different from those who rushed in a mob against meeting-houses; some of these were of the old Church, some of the new; but out of them all—Papal and Protestant—grew up a party which revolted, not against the throne itself, but against the power behind the throne; not against kings, but against usurpers. The quick movement of the Guises when the weak husband of their niece took the crown, drew sharply the party lines. For a few months all France was Guise or anti-Guise. Between the two divisions stood a foreigner, a Medici—the queen-mother. Hitherto neglected, once threatened with a divorce and a dismissal to Italy, long without a shadow of power, scarcely recognized as a wife and much less as an advising queen, she had waited her time, and now she drew all eyes to herself. What would she do? That was the universal question. All Europe wanted to know. The pope's legate caught every whisper he could; heard Mary of Scots say to her, in scorn of her ancestry, "You ought always to have remained a shopman's daughter;" and wrote to his master that he could tell nothing about it—that

* "Religion was less the cause than the pretext," says Lacratelle, Guerres de Religion, Introd.

"The historians, who view in religious wars only religion itself, have written large volumes, in which we may never discover that they have either been a struggle to obtain predominance or an expedient to secure it. The hatreds of ambitious men have disguised their own purposes, while Christianity has borne the odium of loosening a destroying spirit among mankind; which, had Christianity never existed, would have equally prevailed in human affairs. . . . If we call that *religious* which we shall find for the greater part is *political*, we are likely to be mistaken in the regimen and cure. . . . Good men of both parties, mistaking the natures of these religious wars, have drawn horrid inferences."—*Disraeli*, *Curios. Literat.*, article on "Political Religionism," all of which we cannot endorse.

she was giving favour to the new religion, and yet might satisfy the Romanists.

In the state of affairs at court, Coligny and the Protestant nobles saw that they must act with vigour or lose everything. They saw that with the advancement of the Guises there must come tyranny, intolerance, the inquisition, the hot heat of the "Burning Chamber," work for the hangman and the desolation of the new Church. They saw only one person who might hold the balance of power between all parties, and, strangely enough, that one was Catherine de Medici! Wise as she was, hitherto reserved, enlisting their sympathies while she was kept in the shade, captivating, indulgent to the new doctrines among the ladies of her court, keen as a detective, no friend to the Lorraines, the foe of the Spaniards thus far, and the hater of the Duchess Diana's abominations and hypocrisies, we need not wonder that the Protestant leaders looked now to her in hope of favour. She acted from policy; they did not yet detect her want of principle. She had been most careful of her company, and had lately shown a high esteem for Admiral Coligny, his half-sister, Madame de Roye, and others of the Reformed party. It was said that she had even lent an ear to some of the Calvinistic preachers while her royal husband was treating her with his usual royal neglect. One aged Protestant recalled to her quick mind the better days when she was enraptured with the Psalms of Marot, and sang them in the palace. It was hoped that she would remember those good ministers who had consoled her when she had so little comfort on earth that she inquired if there might be any in heaven.

Coligny and others of the nobility addressed to her a memorial before the days of her mourning were ended. In the simplicity of their hearts they thus began: "The pity and the good-will which your majesty has ever deigned to

manifest toward our cause have long taught us to regard you as a second Esther." They assured her that besides the prayer for the late king in their service, they had also been in the habit of entreating God to preserve and enlighten her by his law. They urged that as the mother of the young king it would be her privilege to rescue the guiltless from destruction, and prevent her son from copying the example of his predecessors.

Catherine had tears ever at command, and they plenteously bedewed this memorial. It was returned with the promise that she would put forth every effort in their behalf, and the advice that they would use all caution and avoid meeting for worship too publicly or in too large numbers. The admiral was requested to procure her a conference with the more discreet of the ministers of Paris, and named the day of the king's coronation at Rheims as one when it would attract less public attention. On the day one pastor was admitted to an audience, but with this the matter ended.

Was this pastor Antony Chandieu? Had he gone with Coligny to Rheims in September? Two weeks later Calvin thus refers to Chandieu: "Madame de Roye, mother-in-law of the Prince of Condé, had obtained of the queen-mother that one of the ministers of the church of Paris should be admitted to an interview. After being sent for, he is dismissed with mockery. Meanwhile all things are tending to a horrible butchery, because the disciples of Christ, who have held secret assemblies, are denounced by apostates. The thing is passing sad."*

Thenceforth the love of power absorbed all else in the soul of Catherine. Any expedient to ward off a difficulty was adopted. She loved no one, unless it was her third son, the Duke of Anjou, "the most worthless of a worthless family," and her daughter Elizabeth, just made queen of

* Calvin's Letters, dxlvi., 4th Oct., 1559.

Spain. The other two children were regarded as mere tools, and one of them gave his view of her character when he said that the loss of a spaniel grieved her more than the suffering of a son. When she addressed one of her ladies as "my friend," the attendant looked terrified. "Why are you alarmed?" asked Catherine. "I have always noticed, madame," was the honest reply, "that whomsoever you hate, you call '*friend*,' and never stop till you have destroyed." The queen was greatly amused at the remark. It was to her a compliment. To us it reveals the depth of Italian perfidy.

Meanwhile, Du Bourg was kept in prison. The account of his trial would fill a goodly volume. Enough for our purpose that he stood firm in the faith. The celebrated Merillac was his counsel. Knowing that unless he showed some sign of yielding, his case was desperate, the advocate drew up a confession of faith in such ambiguous terms that the prisoner and the judges could agree to it. Then persuading his client to promise that he would remain silent and let his counsel manage his cause, Merillac began his plea. He pointed out the illustrious birth of the accused, his great acquirements, his rare modesty, his primitive virtues and his excellence as a magistrate, and then argued that all the process was illegal. At the close Du Bourg expected to hear a demand for his release. But how great was his astonishment!

"I admit," said the lawyer, "that the prisoner expressed his opinions too freely in the royal presence, and that he has been deceived by religious impostors, who pretend to extraordinary purity. But the delusion has passed away; he acknowledges his fault and throws himself on the mercy of the court." He then made a private sign to certain judges known to be favourable, for the scheme had been preconcerted with them; the court rose, and Du Bourg had no opportunity of addressing it. He was sent back to his cell.

This stratagem would have saved his life if his noble spirit could have brooked such deceit. Calling for pen and paper, he sat down in his prison and wrote a disavowal of the counsel's statements concerning his repentance. He sent it to parliament. He then wrote a circular letter to the Reformed churches, in order to prevent them from supposing that he shrank from the fiery trial that awaited him. "Had I consulted my own feelings," he wrote, "I would long have been at rest and in the enjoyment of the crown of martyrdom; but I owe it to my brethren, to my faith and to my God to seek as long a time to live as possible, so that I may publish abroad the doctrines which I believe."

Coligny and his friends again appealed to Catherine in behalf of Du Bourg. They stated that her advice to them had been followed; that they had not held their meetings publicly, and still they were persecuted. For themselves, they would promise obedience, but there was a large body of men, not all of them Reformed, who would resort to extreme measures if this nefarious process continued.

"Do they menace me?" exclaimed the queen-mother; "Do they think to make *me* fear? Patience! patience! matters have not yet come to such a point as they imagine." The admiral and Madame de Roye calmed her anger. She then said, "You take too much for granted; you suppose that I approve of your doctrines."

"Rather, we suppose that you pity those who must suffer for them," answered Coligny.

"What enlisted my sympathy for the sufferers was my woman's compassion, rather than a desire to be informed whether their teachings were true or false."

"Compassion should spare even the erring from undue severity," was the plea of Coligny; "and how much more should it spare those who are sincere in their belief, and

whose faith prompts them in all their conduct." About this time the admiral presented her with a written confession of faith, that she might learn the doctrines of the Reformed. She was too busily engaged in balancing parties, and so dividing the rival houses that she might reign, to study new opinions or keep old promises. If she had the least thought of a kind policy toward the Protestants, it was set at naught by the Guises, whom she felt obliged to conciliate.

Songs were heard from the windows of the Bastille, but no crowd was permitted to gather there and listen to Du Bourg, who sang them with fervour in order to proclaim the gospel. One hymn is attributed to him, for he was a poet, beginning—

> "O people, how have ye the heart
> To wage a war against the Lord?"

An attempt was made by his friends to secure his escape, but he was not inclined to employ crafty means. This plan was discovered by an accident; he must suffer the penalty. An iron cage was brought, and he was enclosed in it. And still he played his lute and sang Psalms. The Cardinal of Lorraine declared that he must be condemned, and therefore justice was impossible. The trial was a mockery; he was sentenced to be speedily executed. He listened to his condemnation without one sign of fear. Calvin relates that "he knelt down and thanked God that he was deemed worthy of so great an honour as to die in defence of eternal truth." He prayed that God would pardon his judges, and then rising, he addressed the court, saying, "Quench at length the fires you have kindled, and turn unto God with a penitent heart, that your sins may be forgiven. . . . For you, my brother councillors, farewell and prosper! For myself, I go cheerfully to death. Happen

what will, I am a Christian; yes, I am a Christian, and still louder will I shout it, dying for the glory of my Lord Jesus Christ!"

For four hours he awaited the coming of the officer to lead him to the Grève. In order to prevent an uprising of the people, armed men were placed on the corners of the streets, and fagots were piled up in various places, so that none might know where he was to be burned. "When he came to the place of execution, though surrounded by four hundred guards, he was observed to pull off his cloak and his coat, as if he were willingly retiring to sleep." He was offered a crucifix, but he rejected it, for his mind was fixed upon the true cross of Christ. The last words heard from his lips were: "Father, forsake me not, that I may not forsake thee." He was then strangled and his body burned. It was the twenty-third of December.

Among the students then in Paris was young Florimond de Rémond, who afterward wrote a chronicle of his times. Rigid papist as he was, he said of Du Bourg that every one in the colleges was moved to tears; they pleaded his cause after his death; and that this execution did more harm to the papists than a hundred ministers could have done with all their preaching. Mezeray, a Catholic historian, declares that "his execution inspired many persons with the conviction that the belief professed by so good and so enlightened a man could not be evil." De Thou, an author of the same creed, asserts that his death so embittered and so confirmed the Protestants that "from his ashes sprang that rank growth of revolts and conspiracies which long and heavily overran this once flourishing kingdom."

Pastor Chandieu saw the philosophy of this fact: "Most people like what they see hated so extremely. They think themselves fortunate in knowing what leads others to the gibbet, and return home from the public places edified by

the constancy of those whom they have reduced to ashes." But as means of conversion such scenes were not very efficacious, or the whole land must have soon become Protestant. Hundreds were only maddened by the sight of fire and blood.

The fellow-councillors* of Du Bourg, arrested with him, were punished more lightly and released. Meanwhile, a strict search was made for heretics; houses were entered, plundered, and the dwellers exposed to every outrage. Images of the Virgin Mary were set up at the street-corners; those who did not tip the hat to them were insulted, and many of them flung into prison, banished and put to death.† The Protestants had their patience worn out; they saw that it was worse than useless to attempt secresy; they resumed their former boldness and met more publicly; some of them took the pen and published cutting sarcasms upon the Guises and their obedient servants.

The Guises had set up their engine of destruction, and used the king and cabinet to work it. Edicts were proclaimed that every house proved to have harboured an assembly of Protestants should be razed to the ground, and "whosoever shall be present at a private meeting shall be sentenced to death, without hope of pardon or pity." A man named De Mouchares impressed his infamy upon the very

* Some wit of the time wove the names of the councillors into this couplet:

Par Foix, De la Porte, Du Faur,
J'apperçoi Du Bourg, La Fumée.

—*Mémoires de Conde.*

† The laborious Calvin gave an account of the execution of Du Bourg, adding: "Half a month has elapsed since his death. Many others since that time have been burnt. Every moment new terrors are heaped upon us. I wish from these examples we may learn what is the life of man upon earth; that I may especially, whose dulness cannot be too much aroused."—*Letter to Blaurer.*

language, so that *mouchard* is the term for a police-spy. Acting as a detective, he controlled a band of secret spies and informers, who went everywhere, dragged innocent men and women before the unjust judges, charged them with the basest villainies, extorted money from them and sent them to the stake. "From August to March there was nothing but arrests and imprisonments, the sacking of houses, the outlawry of those suspected and the cruel torment of those condemned."* Many sold their goods and fled to the provinces or to other lands. "The poor became rich, the rich poor." The only fault of many was their wealth, and there were plenty to seize it. Jealous neighbours fleeced or drove away those whom they envied; and as the most wicked had the power in their own hands, lynch law reigned night and day.

"Poor little children [of the martyrs]," says Beza, "who had no bed but the flagstones, went crying piteously through the streets, yet no one dared to relieve their hunger or give them shelter for fear of being accused of heresy; they were less cared for than the dogs." This pictures the terror, but what a proof of the barbarity of the persecutors was seen when other little children dipped their hands in the martyr's blood and boasted what they would do! Crosses and images were set up in the streets, with tapers burning before them, and around them a noisy crowd singing and praying, thus reminding one of the idolatries exacted by Nebuchadnezzar in the heathen days. If any one failed to tip his hat or drop money into the alms-boxes, some wretch shouted "heretic," and the mob had their diversion. To call one a "Lutheran" was to brand him for the slaughter. One man was hanged, while a thief was set free. Every Barabbas had a chance for liberty if he only cursed the heretics. "Death was made a carnival."

* La Planche (or De Serres), Hist. Etat de France sous Francois II.

From his watch-tower amid the Alps, Calvin looked abroad over France, saw the clash which preceded a storm and in great sorrow thus wrote: "Unless God provide a remedy in time, there will be no end to the effusion of blood. A much greater number of men has been cast into fetters than during the two preceding years. . . . In Provence the brethren, attacked by private individuals with the sword and outrage, have begun to defend themselves. Hitherto they have had the upper hand, and have slain but few, though they might have exterminated all to a man. We have till now kept back the Normans, but it is greatly to be feared that, if they be excessively provoked, they will rush to arms. God, then, is to be entreated that of his admirable goodness and wisdom he would calm all these troubled billows."

CHAPTER VII.

A CHIEFTAIN WANTED.

(1559.)

THE old town of Condé, near Belgium, and noted for its ancient military strength, gave title to a young prince of the blood, who won for himself a brilliant reputation as a military hero. He was Louis de Bourbon, born 1530, at Vendôme. Schooled in war from his youth, he became bold, hardy and adventurous. He was not to be judged by his outward appearance, nor by his air of carelessness and frivolity, for beneath the surface was an ardent, lofty and indomitable spirit. Small and slender, yet strong and active, lively and erring, yet often serious, his whole life was one brave struggle with narrow circumstances and with ceaseless opposition. Yet few men had a wider circle of friends. With qualities truly loyal, generous even to an enemy, winning and easy to be won, indeed often too caressing, sincere, affable, eloquent, he had a sort of popularity which ran in fireside stories and songs of the street.* He had also great faults enough to mar one of the finest fortunes ever committed to a man and blast the happiness of one of the truest wives. Bound as he was to Coligny in the grand Huguenot cause, we need to know him when he shall so often move along our path.

Among the noble women of the French Reform was Madeline, the Countess of Roye, the half-sister of Coligny.

* Perau, Vie de Louis de Bourbon; MM. Haag, La France Protestante; Lacratelle; Thuanus.

Her pious mother's lessons and example were not lost. She avowed herself a Protestant along with her warlike brothers, corresponded with Calvin, braved the contempt of a court where Diana reigned, and rendered efficient aid to the church of Paris. Her position was yet to be of greater importance to the chiefs of the Reform. One of her daughters—Charlotte—became the wife of the Count Rochefoucault; Eleanor heard the name of Condé with no little interest. In 1551 she married him. There was some force in the motive, urged by her relatives, of uniting more firmly the houses of Chatillon and Bourbon against the Lorraines. The Jesuit Maimbourg says that "she and her mother were women of much spirit, affection and virtue, but were two of the most ardent and determined Huguenots of their time."*

The Prince of Condé—one of the heroes of Saint Quentin and Calais—had reason to expect some favours from the young King Francis. His heart sank within him when he appealed in vain to his brother Antony to assert his claim to the regency. His next resource was the influence of Coligny with the queen-mother. But here he was checked by the Guises. However, to get rid of him, they sent him on a mission to obtain the signature of Philip to the last treaty. "What outfit?" Vain question for a prince who was too poor to appear in dignity before the monarch of the widest realm in Christendom. Perhaps the Colignys supplied the funds.

The Guises next sought to embroil Condé and Coligny, by saying to the latter, "Do you know that our Bourbon cousin has applied for the government of Picardy? He wants to get it away from you." Coligny was surprised, but his reply was generous: "I am ready to resign the office in his favour." Half suspicious of a trick, he did not re-

* Histoire du Calvinisme. De Thou gives them high praise.

sign until he had seen Condé, who had never made any such application. It was a specimen of Guisean strategy. The admiral resigned, but Condé was cheated; the office was given to Brissac. Another scheme was to expose Coligny to a storm of Montmorency's wrath, but the old man poured forth his fire against the duke and cardinal. Such attempts only united the opposition. They were also intended to remove from the court all the princes and nobles of true French blood, and secure the kingdom to such "foreigners"* as the Guises and Catherine. Is it to be wondered that there were murmurs among the people? Is it strange that the Protestant nobles began to whisper of some mode of redress? If France could have acted independently, she might have accepted the Reform, which sprung up on her own soil, and was watered by her sons at Geneva. The fierce enemy of the Reformation was no longer the Sorbonne, nor the parliament, nor the king; these had done their worst, and were overshadowed by other forces. The most powerful foe was of foreign birth and importation, thrust upon her when a Medici and the Guises gained full control over the Church and the State.

The Prince of Condé champed the bit with which the Guises would curb him or drive him as they chose. He hated "the foreigners," in his loyal love for France. He had dreams of rousing the nobility, rescuing the young king from the strangers and restoring the true French monarchy. "God's time is often slow," said Coligny, whom he loved as an uncle, "but is always sure and safe; it will be our time."

"God's time to do us most good," added Madame de

* *Etrangers*, in the French histories; *homines peregrinos*, in De Thou. The people of that day understood the expression in one of the printed broadsides, "Voicy les estrangers à nos portes."—*Mémoires de Condé.*

Roye, "is our day of adversity. It was so with the admiral and his brother Andelot."

"In prison! Was that all they endured?" replied Condé, with his usual air of gayety, hoping to ward off the religious appeal. "A dungeon is nothing to my disgrace. Yet I suppose that if they sang for joy in their prisons, I ought to shout for glory, since my case is more desperate than theirs." He felt that he was ruined. His friends urged him to avow himself a Protestant.

It does not appear that he gave his thoughts to the Bible or his heart to God. He was not seeking a principle of life, but a policy of action. Chafed by various affronts, hopeless of success in gaining an appointment from the king and council, ambitious of the honours of a public career and cherishing a revenge toward the party in power, he saw but one remedy for the evils under which he groaned. He saw that fully half the nobles were inclined to Protestantism. Why might they not combine and effect a change in the government? From Brest to Metz, from Bayonne to Boulogne, the realm was alive with converts to the new doctrines. Among them were men trained to endure hardship, fearless of danger, zealous for their rights and their religion, bound by strong ties to each other, and in correspondence with the Swiss Reformers and the German princes. Give them a chieftain, and they seemed ready to pledge their faith, unite their forces and to demand their rights and their liberties, or lose all in the effort to extort them. A leader was wanted. Antony of Navarre had proved unworthy of so great a trust.

Coligny was the proper man. He would avoid war, and command a moral force which the Guisards must respect, if they did not give way before it. But Coligny was not ambitious for such a headship. Condé was put forward, and he decided upon his course. He changed his religion

with a rapidity peculiar to all his movements. He was asked by his friends to name a place for the chiefs to meet him in conference.

"Let it be Vendôme," he replied. My new life may well begin at my birth-place. It is a good old town, full of Protestants. In my childhood they almost won me by talking of the great Queen Margaret of Navarre. We shall be well housed and safe in our deliberations. An escort is to meet my brother, the King of Navarre, at that place. Under that pretext we can assemble, and if we spend three or four days in getting Antony ready for an appearance at court, who need be troubled about it?" Thus in order to avoid suspicion all was arranged by the favourite prince, of whom the later song ran:

> The little man so handsome,
> Who always talks and always smiles,
> And wins all whom he will, the whiles—
> God keep from harm the little man.

"They are going to bring up the King of Navarre," said the people along the ways as goodly companies passed through the towns, and that was all they knew about it. The king took courage when he saw in the proposed escort Chartres, Porcian, Rochefoucauld, the secretary of Montmorency, and the three Colignys; for Cardinal Odet had cast his lot with the Reformed. Antony might well have coveted the whole of them to make a parliament for Navarre. He was greeted with enthusiasm, both by the nobles and the people. The conference began. Coligny had brought discouraging news from Paris to this effect: "The Guises now defy their rivals and their enemies. The Spanish ambassador insisted that the King of Navarre be forbidden to approach the capital. If not, Philip would make war upon Navarre—"

"Is there such a mandate?" inquired the frightened Antony. "Dare such a mandate be published?" exclaimed his brother. "Will Frenchmen endure such insolence and injustice? Let us rise in our might—"

"You have not heard me through," said the admiral, whose usual slowness of speech had contributed to the alarm. "Catherine has prevented such an outrage. It will be our privilege to attend the King of Navarre to the capital."

"And what then?" asked Condé, his eyes flashing as they met those of the discontented nobles. "Who will grant us our rights? The young King Francis has chosen his ministers of state without convening the states-general—rather they have usurped the power; and now we have but one course left: we must take up arms and drive these foreigners from the court."

"Agreed," said Andelot, "and that speedily. Every hour of delay is golden to our enemies." To this view several other nobles assented.

"I must oppose all warlike efforts," said the deliberate admiral. "What positive claim have the princes of the blood to a regency? Young as the king is, he is of the legal age to choose for himself, and he has the right to select his uncles as his ministers. This we must grant. Peace will gain more than war. If we show a strong union among ourselves, and if some of us who have the ear of Catherine will use our influence, the Guises may be induced to act with moderation and to grant to the princes some degree of their just authority."

"Let us avoid war," echoed the time-serving Antony. "I will go to the capital and demand liberty of conscience for the Protestants. This will give us a power which our enemies will dread; for the despised Protestants will come forth from their hiding-places and astound the world by their numbers and their united strength."

The wiser counsels of the admiral prevailed. The conference adjourned, to be renewed at the call of the Prince of Condé. By slow journeys Antony was escorted to Paris. But there he must bear the insult of not being expected. The court had gone to the château of Saint Germain, five leagues from Paris. He sent thither a chamberlain to give notice of his arrival, and to prepare for his use the rooms which he usually occupied in that palace. Here was a second insult: the Duke of Guise lodged in those apartments, and refused to vacate them. The chamberlain was closely examined by the Guises in regard to the design of his master's visit and the number of his suite. Then the imperious cardinal exclaimed: "Tell your master that it will cost him his life and that of some ten thousand men, before he deprives us of the place which he seeks and of the apartments assigned to us here by the good favour of the king."

This threat of war might have been taken by Condé as a challenge, but Coligny thought it wisest to ignore it. The princely train set out for the palace. Quaintly reads the old chronicle: "The kings of France, in their greatness, have this custom, that when they wish to favour any prince or great lord, and know the hour they are expected, the king goes courteously to meet them, under pretence of hunting that way; and so comes upon them by accident, as it were, which is esteemed a great honour. Then, before all the court, the king returns with them, engaged in loving conversation. But nothing of this sort was done for the King of Navarre. The Duke of Guise took care to lead the hunt in quite a contrary direction; and so the King of Navarre arrived at the château without the slightest notice from all the courtiers. And he found his lodging so little prepared that all his trunks and boxes were scattered about the courtyard. Having dismounted, he went straight to

the queen-mother, with whom was the Cardinal of Lorraine, who moved not one step to meet him or greet him; and when he had made his respects to the queen, he (the cardinal) looked at him in the most haughty fashion; at which people were astonished." The king and the duke returned to heap still further insults upon poor Antony.

The distressed King of Navarre at last found a friend with a good memory. Two years before he was in Paris, when the wife of the Marshal St. André came to him entreating his aid in releasing one of her retainers from prison, into which he had been thrown for heresy. King Henry was absent at Amiens. Antony assumed a royal authority and set the prisoner at liberty, at the risk of offending Henry, who afterward calmed his rage, forgave the fault and said, "You will do well, Sire, in future to remember the rank you hold in France." He now had it forced on his mind, but St. André had not forgotten him. His wife, probably, suggested it, and he offered to the shelterless king his own apartments. Antony accepted the offer; it was coming down from royalty, but still it was securing comfort. The Guises were not yet satisfied. They excluded the royal visitor from the council board; and after loading him with disgraces, they persuaded him to say to King Francis that he had wisely chosen his ministers, and they had wisely begun their administration. His rivals had first cheated, then charmed him. His friends were disgusted and looked to him no more as a leader. He must have some toy to please him; he was, therefore, sent to conduct Philip's unseen bride to Spain—an affair which was so managed that it only added to his disgrace. At the borders he gave Elizabeth over to the Spanish escort, and returned to Navarre, despised by his foes and deserted by his friends.

The Prince of Condé summoned another conference at La Ferté, a town on his estate in Champagne. The Pro-

testant nobles came; many of the Reformed churches sent their deputies. The question was whether they should take up arms? The prince urged it as a necessity for their self-defence. "We have lost time already," said he. "Why did we hesitate at Vendôme? you were checked—and must I say it?—the curb was applied by my great and good friend, who advised moderation, when a bold stroke was our only safe policy. Will he again speak sweet words to lull your enslaved spirits?"

All knew who was meant, all waited for him to rise when the prince sat down. Courteous and grandly cool, he stood up to give his opinion. It would be of great worth, for the man was Coligny. He had not been idle. By his letters and couriers he had learned the state of the Protestant churches. He knew more of their strength than any man in the realm. He knew what sympathy they had from all other malcontents. When the assembly hung upon his voice, he thus gave his opinion:

"France is full of converts to the new doctrines. They are of all classes, all conditions. In spite of the fact that they are hunted down and terribly persecuted, in spite of the efforts to exterminate them, they increase from day to day, in the provinces as well as in the capital. While the foe rages they are falling into despair of any deliverance from this oppression. They look to their chiefs, who are able to govern them and secure to them liberty of conscience. If we profit by their disposition, they will find in us the staff on which they may lean, and we shall find in them the material for a party indomitable. As one man will the whole phalanx be.

"Their adversaries are our own. They attribute the new and fierce edicts to the Cardinal of Lorraine and the Duke of Guise. No doubt they can be persuaded to offer their goods and lives to carry on a war. They may send you legions

of soldiers, and you may obtain foreign aid. But let us not make our ambition the motive for embroiling the kingdom in strife. Let it not be the desire to have a part in the government and the officers of state. That must prove our eternal reproach. If we undertake a war, let it be for conscience, for religion and for God. In the name of Jehovah we will lift up our banners."

"All very well," whispered certain political aspirants—"very beautiful—good thing to have a conscience—and best of all to have a God on our side. But on the basis of religion we cannot all unite. We are not all Protestants."

"In the name of our king and our country," cried some who had not the honest boldness of Coligny, and yet who accused him of timidity, "let us rise. Here is the broad basis of union. If the Guises be the common enemy, all who detest their tyranny will pour out treasure and blood in rescuing our young king from their hands."

"Yes, a war for the king, not against him," shouted Condé. "That is the word. A holy crusade for his deliverance; that will rally the hosts."

"No," said Coligny, "that is but a war to dethrone the Guises and put yourselves in their places. There is ambition in it. There is the covetousness for office. It is political, earthly, selfish. My conscience forbids it. If it be not waged for my country or my religion, I must retire to my home and pray for peace." It is more courageous to fight for conscience than for preferment, but Coligny seems to have stood alone in his sublime position.* He was not followed. He retired to Chatillon, where his noble wife threw herself at his feet, imploring him to ride forth with the more ambitious chiefs and break the oppressors' arm. It was in vain. Conscience was not melted by tears.

* Tumulte d'Amboise (Mém. de Condé), De Thou, Perau.

The assembled nobles at La Ferté drew the fine distinction between a war for the king and a war against him. In the one case they would be loyal, in the other rebellious.

They declined now to enter upon a war for religion. Yet they claimed theological authority for taking the sword to deliver their king when he was oppressed by his ministry.* It did not come from Geneva. Still they hesitated, shaken by Coligny's thrust at their motives. They went home to think and wait their time.

There is no evidence that a plot was laid at La Ferté for the seizure of the king, yet a scheme was ripening in the mind of a reckless adventurer, who involved Coligny in trouble, and almost brought Condé to the gibbet.

The arrogance of the Cardinal of Lorraine brought affairs to a crisis. He abused his power as the minister of finance. He was beset with demands upon the almost empty treasury. Soldiers asked for their arrears of pay; bankers urged that their accounts should be settled. The cardinal lost his patience. He ordered several gibbets to be raised close to the palace of Fontainebleau—some have it St. Germain—and there proclaimed that all captains, soldiers, bankers and gentlemen who came to demand their money should depart from the court in twenty-four hours, on pain of being hanged without trial or delay. As most of the claimants were men of rank, the French nobility took fire at this insult, and talked of revenge. Brantome in his way tells us, "This fine proclamation, and the discontent thence arising, together with the *pretext* of religion, mainly contributed to help forward the conspiracy of Amboise." What he calls the "*pretext* of religion," was really the

* *Apologie Chretienne;* one of the many tracts issued by the Protestants in those times, and which fill a large space in the Mémoires de Condé. Anquetil says that the Calvinists took up arms for religion; *et les mécontents seulement contre les Guises.*

deeply-rooted intention of the Protestants and their sympathizers to resist an intolerable oppression.

The Guises knew that they were forcing their opponents to measures of self-defence. They ordered the guards "to wear jackets of mail and pistols," but they forbade all gentlemen to carry arms, and even to wear any sort of garments in which weapons might easily be concealed. Laws which regulate dress must always be offensive to a people. The long, sleeveless cloak of that day must be laid aside. The order bore, it seems, only upon the Protestants, and they probably went on wearing what they pleased. One proof appears in the rescue of seventeen persons who had been arrested at Blois "for the Word's sake." An escort was taking them to Orleans, when sixty armed men rode down upon them and set all the prisoners at liberty.

Whispers of a plot to seize the young king and rescue the throne from "the usurping foreigners" reached Calvin. A gentleman of military rank visited him, introducing himself as Godfrey du Barry, the Sieur de la Renaudie, and asking him, "Is it lawful to resist the tyrants who oppress the people of God?"

"It is not lawful to employ arms against rulers; there is no warrant for it in the word of God," replied Calvin, making good his point by the proofs. "Even if there were some warrant for it, your measures are ill-devised, presumptuous and certain of failure."

"We do not propose to shed blood," said the captain, "but to rescue our king and establish his authority."

"If a single drop of blood is shed in such an attempt, floods of it will deluge Europe; and it is better that we should perish a hundred times than expose Christianity to such a reproach. Yet a distinction might be made. If the princes of the blood demand to be maintained in their rights for the common good, and if the parliament join

them in their claims, then," said the Reformer, "I admit that it will be lawful for all good subjects to lend them armed assistance."

The visitor took courage. Might not Calvin concede as much as certain German divines? They thought that the French Protestants might lawfully oppose the usurpation of the Guises with arms, even if but one of the princes were at their head. The question then was, "Suppose but one of the princes take this matter in hand, may we not support him?"

"No," replied Calvin, most emphatically. "I condemn all your proposals. I beg of you to abandon all such schemes." Calvin thought that the man took his advice; therefore he says: "I did not breathe a syllable on the subject, because it would only have been breeding disturbances to no purpose." Was this the part of an accomplice?

Calvin afterward wrote to defend himself and his brethren: "When, eight months ago, these designs began to be agitated, I interposed my authority to prevent them from proceeding further—secretly and quietly, it is true, because I feared, if any report about the affair should reach the ears of the enemy, I should be dragging all the godly to a horrid butchery. I fancied that all violent movements had been quashed, and even quieted down, till an individual of no personal merit came to me from France, and boasted that he had been appointed the leader of the enterprise. I at once put a stop to his bragging, and declared my utter abhorrence of his conspiracy. The next day this needy wretch, who was hunting in all directions for booty, that he might catch a rich friend in his nets and by a public collection scrape together a good round sum of money, told a barefaced lie, declaring that I did not disapprove of the conspiracy, but that I refused to take any public part in it, to avoid odium."

This man, La Renaudie, was a gentleman oi Perigord. Able and active, he had been rendered desperate by a vexatious lawsuit. He had been disgraced and punished for the crime of forgery, of which he had, probably, not been guilty. He had been released from prison and banished, and on his way from France he had met with some one who knew the secret intentions of the Prince of Condé. His brother-in-law had been put to death by the Duke of Guise, who hoped to silence his revenge by obtaining for him leave to return to his native country and have his lawsuit reconsidered. Intrepid, enterprising, smooth, eloquent, insinuating and an enthusiast, he had the qualities for a perfect conspirator.

When Calvin learned that his name was used for raising money, he asked Beza to send for La Renaudie. He called in several witnesses, and confronted the schemer to his face. "You knew," said the Reformer, "before you left Paris, that I was utterly opposed to this project, and surely you have not converted me by your pretensions."

"You will think it more worthy," said La Renaudie, "when I tell you that the Admiral Coligny gives it his favour."

"That I cannot believe," replied Calvin, "on the testimony of one who has proved himself false in this city."

The conspirator departed, seeking those who would be more easily entrapped. He was successful in enlisting men and gaining money. "As he had a caressing manner,," says Calvin, "and was versed in the art of cajolery, he won the affection of many among us, so that in the space of three days his principles corrupted this city, as if it were by contagion. Many men among the nobility, as well as among the working-people, began to hold secret meetings." All was done "under the seal of an oath not to disclose anything that was going on." In Berne and Lausanne he also

raised troops, ready for a secret march. The gates of Geneva were closely guarded, lest armed men should depart. Various devices were employed to gain an exit.

Among the French refugees at Geneva for their religion were the Baron Castelnau and the lord of Villemongis. Each had been drawn into the plot. At first Villemongis turned it into ridicule, and flatly refused to have anything to do with it. Then, "being frank and straightforward," says Calvin, "he consulted me, whether he should undertake a journey to settle some matters with his brother, who had reduced him to great straits. I have no doubt but he was swayed by this motive, but he was also actuated by another consideration."

"I promise to avoid all contact with the conspirators," said he, "and stand aloof from their projects."

"I know you," replied Calvin. "You will not stand aloof when once you are on the spot. Remain, then, where you are."

"Of course, if Coligny should command me, I could not dare to refuse entering into the plot."

"Have you profited so little in the school of God as to do evil to please men? The greatest service you could render the admiral to whom you bear so great an affection would be to prevent him from meddling in this business and tell him that I send him word in the name of God; to avoid all wrong and not become entangled in the affair. But I have no fear of his embarking in such a childish game."*

* Calvin's Letters, dlxi., dlxii., dlxiii., dlxxxviii. (the last to Admiral Coligny). The extent of Calvin's information shows that he had prompt and full correspondents in France. He is worthy of attention on the events of his time.

The Amboise tumult was related to the Huguenot wars about as the Boston tea affair was to the American war of independence. It is

However, Villemongis could not rest until he had decided to return to France. He intended to visit the admiral, but probably fell into other hands. About sixty persons left Geneva, despite the protests of Calvin.

La Renaudie reappeared in France. His first care was to visit every part of the kingdom and enlist the discontented in his scheme—not only Protestants, but Roman Catholics. He drew many of them to Nantes, where they made weddings enough for a capital *ruse*. The February of 1560 had just opened. He laid before them his plans. Districts were allotted to different chiefs, who were to raise forces speedily and secretly, and be ready for a sudden movement. At the proper time they were all to take the by-roads and assemble in the neighbourhood of Blois, where the court was then residing. Then certain of the leaders were to go unarmed into the king's presence and present a petition for liberty of conscience. Of course this would be rejected, and the leaders dismissed. Then the conspirators were to rush into the town, as if made furious by this rejection, seize the Guises and hold them for trial, and place the king in the hands of the Prince of Condé, who was to be near the court, but not engaged in the enterprise.

Such was the plan. Its secresy astonished the historian De Thou, who regards it as a proof of the violent hatred against the Guises—"a hatred which could gather together so many men from all parts of the country; among whom good faith was so religiously preserved that the first intimation the Guises received of the conspiracy was from Germany, Italy and Spain, rather than from the spies and informers with whom they had covered the face of the king-

worthy of notice because it involved somewhat the Colignys and their Protestant friends. The literature on the subject is very extensive. The Protestants were not alone in holding that in the "tumult" there was *plus de malcontentement que de Hugonoterie,* as Anquetil affirms.

dom; one man only being found in France, and he a Protestant, who, in abhorrence of the thing, could be found to divulge it."

The court was at Blois for the benefit of the young king's health. His presence caused almost a solitude, for upon all sides the peasants had disappeared. He noticed the general fear of him, and asked, sorrowfully, what he had done to excite such a dread and hatred of him. He was soothed by some gentle reply. The fact was, that a strange report had been spread abroad; it was that the king was a leper, and that the only means of healing him were daily baths of infants' blood! Who would circulate so horrible a rumour? Some persons had gone into the villages, pretending to be sent by the royal family, and taken lists of the young children. One of these presumed agents was arrested. He declared that he had acted under the orders of the Cardinal of Lorraine, and that he had been instructed to circulate reports that the blood of all the reigning family was corrupt! If this were true, the cardinal meant to excite prejudice against the house of Valois, and thus open the way for the house of Guise to take the throne. If it was false, the effect was the same; it aided greatly the scheme. The peasants who remained were ready to give a welcome hiding-place to the assumed liberators of the king.

The court soon received alarming news. A lawyer of Paris, named Avenelles, and a Protestant, with whom the chief actor had lodged, had suspected that his many visitors had other errands than friendship. He sounded his guest, learned the secret, reported it to the ministers of the king, and got his reward. On the tenth of March (1560), five hundred mounted gentlemen and about twelve hundred armed footmen were to concentrate near Blois. Not a moment was to be lost. The king must be secured. It is said that Catherine let herself down from a window in her escape.

The court, under pretence of a hunting-party, went to the neighbouring village of Amboise, and took refuge in the castle built on a hill and surrounded by a heavy forest. The royal troops were ordered to hasten and defend the place.*

"What have I done to my people, that they thus pursue me?" pitifully asked the poor sick king, weeping as he appealed to his uncles. "I will hear their complaints and redress them. I wish that you would absent yourselves for a time, so that I may see whether it is you or me against whom they rage." The Lorraines took good care not to comply with this advice, for, once out of court, they would have seen the whole nobility of France rise up to prevent their return.

Only those "foreigners" need be afraid, as the court soon learned; for the king employed that keen diplomatist, Michael de Castelnau,† to ferret out the matter. As he was friendly to the Guises, his testimony is worth attention. He says: "I remember that when the conspiracy of Amboise was first discovered, having then the honour of being near his majesty's person, he sent me to get what informations I could of their designs. And some told me that their intention was only to present a petition to the king against the house of Guise; that there had been a meeting of Protestants at Nantes on this subject; that La Renaudie was appointed to manage the matter; that he also employed

* "The town of Amboise is mean and ill-built. . . . The castle is situated on a craggy rock, extremely difficult of access, and the sides of which descend almost perpendicular. At its foot flows the Loire. I am not surprised that the Duke of Guise, in the apprehension of an insurrection among the Huguenots, chose to remove Francis the Second to this fortress."—*Wraxall's Tour in France,* 1776.

† A very different man from the Protestant Castelnau of Geneva, but an admired historian of his time.

Condé as the head (although this chief was now at Amboise); that the resolution was to seize and prosecute the Guises for high treason; and this with consent of his majesty. Although the Protestants were accused of a design to murder the royal family and the lords of the council, yet the common opinion was that they only intended to extirpate the house of Guise and place the princes of the blood, the families of Montmorency and Chatillon (then out of favour), at the head of affairs, in hopes of being supported by them. *And this certainly was their design.*"

He also says that the Duke of Guise fell upon a band of the enemy, and "that most of the poor country fellows, not knowing what to do, threw away their old rusty arms and begged for mercy. In their simplicity they declared that they knew nothing more than that they were to meet on a certain day to present a petition to the king, for the good of himself and of the kingdom." Such evidence is not to be set aside.*

"It is you, it is you," said the young king to the Cardinal of Lorraine, "who have rendered me odious to my subjects." He and his queen repented the day that they had sacrificed all to the ambition of her uncles.

"To the Admiral Coligny we must resort," was the advice of Catherine, who heartily rejoiced that she had given some hope to the Protestants and wished to treat with them. Had she received a paper from the minister Chandieu? It so appears from a current report. "Let us follow the counsels which have been so despised. All is lost if we do not calm the Protestants."

"No truce with heretics!" exclaimed the furious Lorraine; and the work of blood went on.

The Guises shrewdly wished to test the Admiral Coligny,

* Mémoires de Castelnau.

whom they suspected and feared. They requested the queen-mother to write to him—for she still favoured him—and invite him to Amboise for the protection of the king.* Andelot was also summoned. Conscious of innocence, they repaired to the court without delay. They avowed loyalty, but the admiral gave the advice which the chancellor desired. "I do not hesitate to declare," said he, "that the present discontent arises from the violent measures of the administration, and the persecution of those who worship God according to their consciences. Yet it is not too late to allay these disorders. It may be done by publishing an edict granting liberty of conscience, and promising to refer religious disputes to a general council." Catherine also urged that all violent measures be suspended.

"It must be done," replied the usually wavering Chancellor Olivier; and it was attempted at once. An edict was prepared, hurried through parliament and published on the twelfth of March. But the hand of treachery had despoiled it of mercy and justice. It exempted from pardon all Protestant preachers, all who had conspired against the royal family and the *principal* ministers of state, and, in short, everybody who was at all likely to need a pardon. And even a pardoned man was made liable to a secret arrest and speedy trial if he had not utterly renounced the Reformed doctrines. This paper added fuel to the flames; and, as if there were not provocation enough, the Duke of Guise asked to be fully confirmed lieutenant-general of the kingdom. There was no one to deny the request; thus he was almost an absolute dictator.†

* "Ad concilium opemque ferendam."—*Pallavicino, Hist. Concil. Trident.*, lib. xiv. cap. 12. This defender of the popes mentions Admiral Coligny as "a man illustrious in virtue, in council, in authority, and in the number of his vassals."

† The hand of Lorraine is evident in a proclamation issued the 16th

The Prince of Condé, the *mute chief* of the movement, was among the first at the trysting-place. But his part was not to make a foray; it was to thrust himself between the king and the Guises and assume the protection of his sovereign. As he entered the gates of the castle of Amboise, the unusual number of sentinels and certain precautions in his reception convinced him that the plot was discovered and that he was suspected, but, feeling sure that he had not yet been denounced as a conspirator, he at once declared loyalty to his king. Indeed, his loyalty was so strong that he wished to rescue Francis from tyranny. He affected great indignation on hearing that there were traitors bold enough to threaten violence. He requested that some post might be given him in which he might assist in defending the castle. Did he craftily intend thus to introduce the enemy? Perhaps he sought to retrieve himself. This offer was granted, but pains were taken to place him where he could neither aid the conspirators nor make sure his own escape.

The dalliance of the King of Navarre had helped the Guises into power; the delay of La Renaudie and his band prevented them from being thrust out of power. A surprise was the hope of the insurgents, but a surprise was now impossible. Time had worn on from the tenth to the seventeenth of March. The forests, which might have been their avenue to the castle, were now the ambush of its defenders. La Renaudie, with five hundred mounted gentry, drew near the gates. Mazeres led seventy picked men into the town to operate with Condé. He concealed them in

of March, in the name of the king. It gives the duke a royal power to bring all the artillery of France against "les seditieux et rebelles," then at the gates of Amboise. He might arrest and punish them with "the pains and usual rigours, without form or figure of trial."—*Mémoires de Condé* (*Pouvoir du Duc de Guise*).

garrets and cellars. Another captain undertook to lodge thirty more in the castle itself. New plots were laid; a new traitor exposed them.

A thrilling address was issued to the "French people." It rings like the eloquence of Condé or La Renaudie. It ran: "The hour has come for us to show what faith and loyalty we have to our king. The enterprise is discovered, the house of Guise has detected it. Behold the strangers at our gates! They would seize all. They know our fidelity to our prince. They would tear him from us. They call for foreign armies from Italy and England. They will tax and oppress you more and more. O poor French nation! Is this the regard they have for you? Has it come to pass that a king has no subjects to guard and defend him? Will not God, ever good and kind, avenge the blood of the innocent people? Shall these strangers destroy your children and cover you with infamy? Shall the crown be snatched from those whom the house of Guise calls *Huguenots*,* because they are the descendants of Hugo Capet, and usurped by those who name themselves after Charlemagne?" This was of no avail.

All was known. The Duke of Guise sent out his men; they fell upon the advancing parties, scattered them, slew some with the sword, tied others to their horses and dragged them to the castle, where they hung them from the battlements; drowned some in the Loire and stretched others dead in the streets. La Renaudie made a brave and fierce attack, but, finding that his gentlemen could not resist the

* I find no earlier use of this term as applied to a party in France. It is to be noted that it was thus used before the result at Amboise. It did not originate there with the peasantry. Of this more again. But we remark that it was then applied to all the opposers of the Guises, and not simply to the Protestants.—*Mém. de Condé* (*Complainte au Peuple Français*).

veteran warriors, he rushed forward to end his life in an honourable manner; he slew a valiant knight, whose page turned upon him and shot him dead upon the spot.

The Baron Castelnau was brought to a parley with the Duke of Nemours, who said, "I charge you with disloyalty to your king."

"I am not in arms against my king," he replied, "but to remonstrate with him upon the arrogance and violence of his ministers."

"This is not the manner in which a loyal subject should remonstrate with his king."

"I and my comrades, in defiance of the Guises," answered the noble baron, "wish to open a way to approach his majesty in all reverence and declare our grievances. We could not do this heretofore without risk of seizure; we could not ask our pay for loyal services without being hanged."

This was too true. Nemours was not insensible to human rights. Changing his tone, he said, "I promise you, on my honour, that if you will surrender, no injury shall be done to you or to any of your comrades. You shall be admitted to the king, state your grievances and depart when and whither you please." He drew forth a paper and signed his name, Jacques de Savoy.

"I accept it," said Castelnau, "on your good faith." With fifteen of his companions he entered the castle of Amboise. But no faith was to be kept with heretics and rebels. These gentlemen were thrown into a dungeon and loaded with fetters. Nemours protested he was "tormented in his mind about his signature," says Carloix, "for as to his word he could have given the lie without a scruple."

The few other attempts were of no avail. The speedy work of vengeance began. Search was made in the town, in the woods, in the houses of the peasants, who had fled

to save their children from the supposed leprous king, and many poor, good men perished, simply for being in bad company. Several travelling merchants were robbed and murdered. On the trees, on gibbets and from the battlements of the castle hung dead men. Nearly twelve hundred were hanged, drowned or beheaded.

The valiant old Huguenot, John d'Aubigné, was on his way to Paris to put his son Theodore Agrippa to school. He saw the faces of many friends among the dead. The aged warrior, shuddering with horror, forgot that he was amid hundreds of listeners, and exclaimed, "Oh, the traitors! they have murdered France." Then putting his hand upon the head of the lad of nine years, he said, "My son, I charge thee, at the hazard of thy own life, as I will at the hazard of mine, avenge these honourable chiefs; and if thou failest to attempt it, my curse shall follow thee to the grave." The crowd were so enraged that D'Aubigné and his escort barely escaped their resentment. Young Theodore fulfilled this charge, became a heroic Huguenot general and historian, whom we shall often quote.

In spite of pledge and signature the Baron Castelnau was put to the torture. The Duke of Guise taunted him with fear when he hesitated to answer the questions put to him. "Fear!" said he; "I by no means deny it. Change places with me, and see whether every limb of your body shall not quiver! But God will aid me in my defence."

"I am surprised," said the Chancellor Olivier, "that in your pursuits you should have become such a profound theologian as you now prove yourself to be."

"I must remind you, sir," was the severe reply, "of a conversation we once held together. When I visited you on my return from an imprisonment in Flanders, you asked me how I had employed the tedious hours of my captivity. I replied that I had studied the Holy Scriptures, and ac-

quainted myself with the controversies then agitating men's spirits. You approved my course; you resolved the doubts which I still retained, and we mutually agreed. How happens it that, since that time, one of us has so greatly changed his opinions that we cannot now understand each other? I will supply your answer. *Then* you were in disgrace, and spoke in the sincerity of your heart; *now* you are the wretched eye-servant of court favour, and in order to please a man who probably despises you, you betray your God and your conscience. Did you not then express the wish that all the nobility of France resembled me in zeal and affection, because I had chosen 'that better part?'" The chancellor held down his head abashed, but the tortured man continued: "How dare you, trembling on the edge of the grave, yield to that cardinal? Is it not enough that you lent yourself to persecute the poor churches of Merindol and Cabrières? Have I not heard you declare with groans and tears that for this God had rejected you? O miserable man! You who have trifled, through life, with God and his Word, know that the time of your account is near!"

The Cardinal of Lorraine came to the relief of his embarrassed colleague, but was soon silenced. Castelnau turned to the Duke of Guise, saying, "I beg you to remark that your brother is confuted."

"I know nothing of arguing," replied the duke, brutally; "but I very well understand how to cut off heads."

"Would to God," answered the baron, "that you did know as much of theology as your brother! I am certain that if you had the light and learning which he possesses, you would employ them to a better purpose. As to the threat of cutting off heads, it is unworthy of such a prince as you." This was a compliment to the duke. But the baron was speedily condemned for treason. On hearing

his sentence, he said, "I ought then to have declared that the Guises are the kings of France!"

The admiral and Andelot went to the king and his mother, begging that so good a man be saved, not only on account of his virtues and the eminent services rendered by his family to the crown, but also to avoid the popular resentment which his execution would provoke. Catherine did all she could; she even went into their apartments and entreated these "new kings, who were become so invisible." But said the cardinal, with an oath, "He shall die; the man breathes not in France who shall save him."

With four other captains he was led to the scaffold. He bowed his head to the axe, appealing from the injustice of man to the justice of his Maker. The last of the four was Villemongis, who had refused Calvin's advice. Dipping his hands in the blood of his comrades, he kneeled at the block, and then raising them to heaven, he cried aloud, "Father, behold the blood of thy children! Thou wilt avenge it."

The whole court witnessed the tragic spectacle. Mary of Scots was there; what a lesson for her who needed to learn how to be a political martyr! The child soon to be crowned as Charles IX. was there; he needed to shudder before taking his part in the massacre of St. Bartholomew. But the only person who shrank from the sight was Anne, the Duchess of Guise. Did she recall the piety of her mother, *Renée*, the firm Protestant, now living in her castle of Montargis? She rushed to her chamber, declaring that vengeance must fall on the heads of her own sons. The Prince of Condé was compelled to be present, and, though surrounded by spies, he uttered words of pity and indignation.

The Chanceller Olivier, usually merciful, retired from the scene, lashed by self-reproach for his temporizing spirit.

A heavy gloom settled upon his mind, followed by an acute fever. The Cardinal of Lorraine visited him in his last agonies, but, according to one account, he recoiled from the sight, turned his face to the wall and expired. Another account is, that he recalled the execution of Du Bourg, and with despair exclaimed, "Ah, cardinal! thou hast caused the damnation of us all!"

The tortured secretary of La Renaudie, in hope of being saved by some exposure of the leaders, affirmed that the Prince of Condé was the silent chief of the movement; that he designed to murder the king, his brothers, the two queens and the Guises, and, overthrowing the monarchy, establish a republic on the Swiss model. This was incredible, even to the Guises. But the king declared his suspicions in Condé's face, and forbade his departure from Amboise. He demanded an inquiry: in full council he defended himself, so that the Duke of Guise rose and said, "So firmly am I convinced of the innocence of the prince that if any accuser appear I tender my services as his second." This was, however, consummate hypocrisy. There was not a shadow of evidence that the admiral was a party in the plot;* the leaders feared to trust it to him, and yet he was kept under the vigilance of the court. At the urgent request of his friends, he published a defence of himself a year or two after the affair had terminated.

The stifling air bore witness to the crime of slaughtering so many Frenchmen, who had been honest in their mis-

* "Some thought that if the admiral and Andelot had been concerned the plot would have succeeded better; but it was believed that, like wise men, they had a mind to see the event of the petition that was to be laid before the king. However none of the conspirators ever charged them with having a hand in it." (None but the secretary of Renaudie, whose words were given under terror and with hope of reward.)—*Mémoires de Castelnau.*

taken policy and conscientious in their motives. The king could not breathe it without hastening his death. The court prepared to remove to Tours. While it was still a question whether to hold the Prince of Condé or set him at liberty, he cut the matter short by an escape. As he mounted his horse to depart, his friend Genlis asked him, "What message shall I bear to the king?"

"Assure him of my most perfect loyalty and submission in every point except religion. I have sworn, and here I solemnly swear again, that I will never go to mass."

Some of the Protestants came to regard the affair at Amboise as a noble attempt to gain their liberty. It revealed to them their strength when properly united and directed. Brantome tells us that many said, "Yesterday we belonged not to the conspiracy, and we would not have been of it for all the gold in the universe; to-day we would be so for the smallest coin, and we say that the enterprise was good and holy." Not thus said Calvin and the more pious Huguenots.

The Reform was in peril. The danger was that the spirit of armed and open resistance would carry away the entire Protestant Church in France. Piety should ever be loyal, but it cannot become political without the saddest decline. Condé was rousing the warlike temper in the Protestants, who could not think of Amboise and its twelve hundred victims and remain utterly indifferent. He went into the far south-west. He put himself in correspondence with the malcontents of all complexions. One-third of the people of the realm were said to be secretly attached to this party. In various places they were preparing for resistance. They heard of Romish priests pouring forth abuse against them with lusty lungs. They read fiery pamphlets and broadsides, pictured with rude wood-cuts, in which they were represented in the most offensive light.

There were also wits among them. They put forth sharp satires, one of which was "The Tiger," written for the especial benefit of the Cardinal of Lorraine. The authorship is still a mystery, but when a Parisian bookseller would not, or could not, tell the author, he was hanged. No one's life was secure at the capital.

In various towns the Romanists armed themselves, often with priests and monks for their captains. Such movements provoked the Huguenots, especially the politicians among them. We need not wonder if they sometimes retaliated, despite the advice of their preachers and the more devout class. They sold and ate meat* openly during Lent, at Rheims, besides crashing a few windows, lanterns and images in the cathedral. At Rouen a fanatic was preaching up purgatory; he was disturbed, called a fool and cried down. In one of Andelot's towns the "new apostles" took possession of the largest church, but they were besieged by the papal clergy, and a culverin pointed against them. They escaped in the night. The bishop was rebuked for it.

The Prince of Condé was resolved upon a more extended resistance. He wished to capture and hold churches, castles, towns and treasuries in the name of the king. But what a cold chill ran over him when he found his brother Antony like an iceberg in the good old harbour of the Protestants! This weak, fickle king had raised some troops for Amboise, but, on the failure of the plot, he had employed them directly against his friends. Ever eager to provide for his own safety, he had attacked a body of two thousand Protestants assembled to give him their support,

* "If any one eats meat in Lent," Erasmus had written, "Heavens! what a noise! The Church is in danger! the world is overrun with heretics!" At Angers, in 1539, those who were arrested for this "heinous sin" were burnt alive if they did not recant, and hanged if they repented.

and driven them home. No pains had he spared to convince the court that he stood by the ministers of the king. "Go back," said he to Condé; "return to the court and allay all suspicions against you, by being loyal."

"Loyal!" replied the prince; "I must be loyal to France and to the interests of all true Frenchmen. Come, you are an older Protestant than I am; you profess more piety; will you be disloyal to the great religious party which will rise in its greatness and deliver both State and Church?" Antony ever sought to be upon the strongest side. The trimmer now began to think that Condé would succeed, and he again changed—a work which skill and practice made easy. His court was once more a refuge for the Protestants. Among them was the elder Maligny (afterward the Vidame of Chartres), who begged him and Condé, in the name of more than a million of men, to take some bold step in the advance. An appeal was published,* the rallying-cry went forth. The younger Maligny led twelve hundred men to surprise Lyons,† but "our Hotspur," as Calvin calls him, failed to hold the city after he had taken it—an illustration of what occurred in other places, where such mistaken efforts were made. It was well. Condé was far out of the right road to Huguenot prosperity.

* Mém. de Condé, Supplication au Roi de Navarre, etc.

† Calvin's Letters, dlxx.; Thuani Hist., lib. xxv.

CHAPTER VIII.

TWO GREAT PARTIES.

THE king was coming to Tours. A baker in the suburbs told his family what a grand entry he would make into the ancient city. His only child, a boy of six years, begged a sight of the gorgeous procession. The man was full of humour, and sought to amuse his son. He took a donkey from the mill, decorated him with calicoes and set on him the child, who had his eyes bandaged, a wooden helmet on his head, and a crest on which was a red-headed bird pecking away at his skull. The donkey was led by two lads coloured and dressed as Moors.

The court was not in the mood to laugh with the crowd that followed the innocent baker's child. Their dignities saw in this silly masquerade the mystery of their politics. They needed no Daniel to interpret its meaning, for they thought it more than a dream. To their sharp perceptions the blindfolded boy represented the king; the red-headed bird was the red-capped Cardinal of Lorraine; the Moorish youths were the foreign princes, and especially the Spanish directors of French affairs. This interpretation was not so far-fetched, but it was altogether unintended. The royal guard were so enraged that they were scarcely restrained from sacking the city. The unmeaning burlesque was charged to the spirit of the harmless Protestants. Perhaps it was turned to their good; for if their faith was not respected, the follies imputed to them wrought a fear of their popular strength.

The story is, that when the insurgents were fleeing from Amboise, the peasants who had harboured them at the risk of life said, "They are not worth a *huguenot*"*—a small coin so named from Hugh Capet. Some have imagined this to be the origin of the title given to the Protestants of France; more than a dozen guesses have been made in this direction. The name became more common after this event, simply because those who bore it were more the objects of ridicule. There can be little question that the term had long been used in Switzerland, having been derived from the word Eidesgenossen—the oath-bound leaguers, and applied chiefly to the liberty party of Geneva.† It might readily pass into France. Davila says, "These people were commonly called Hugonots, because the conventicles that they had in the city of Tours (where that sect first gathered strength and increased) were in certain cellars under ground, near Hugo's gate, from whence they were by the vulgar sort named Hugonots; as in Flanders they were called *Geux* [beggars], because they wore the habit of mendicants. Others relate several ridiculous and fabulous inventions concerning the origin of this name." It was, then, a puzzle in less than a hundred years after it was first applied to the Protestants.

In the pamphlet war of the times another origin was claimed for it by the Protestants, as appears from several

* Mém. de Castelnau, ii. 7.

† Enguenot, un mot Allemand; en François Bon-allié; says the Reverende Sœur Jeanne de Jussie, a contemporary of William Farel. In the margin the word *Huguenot* is used.—*Le Levain du Calvinisme.*

Before me is a very curious and libellous old book (date of 1573), entitled, "Genealogie et la fin des Huguenaux, et descouverte du Calvinisme, par M. Gabriel de Saconay." With great learning he draws parallels between the Calvinists and the apes, deriving from the latter the term Huguenot. Perhaps this priest had nothing better to offer in reply to the scathing pen of Calvin.

of their tracts. The Guises asserted their descent from Charlemagne; the Valois from Hugues Capet. Those who wished to support the latter house against the former took their name from Hugues Capet. The Guises gave it to them in reproach; they accepted it as an honour.* This origin of the term agrees with the character of those who acted with the Protestants from political motives, but names defy all laws of logic. The commotion at Amboise more completely fixes the term upon all the party that resisted the house of Lorraine. The rallying cry of the King of Navarre, while he remained a Huguenot, was, "Christ and Capet."

And now we have to deal with but two great parties, who are deciding the destinies of France. On the one side are able statesmen, keen diplomatists, veteran warriors, clever lawyers, the masses which throng the Romish churches, the array of clergy of all ranks—from the mere lad with a shaven crown and a benefice, to the archbishop and cardinal whose rich livings are reckoned by the dozen—the brilliant assemblage of courtiers, a cabinet in which genius and ambition are rivals for glory, and one woman whose con-

* In the Histoire du Tumult d'Amboise, I find this: "They (the Guises) have composed a sobriquet at pleasure, *par derision de ceux qu'ils disent estre descendus de la race dudict Hugue Capet, les appellans Huguenotz*, thus reproaching not only the loyal people, but also the king and all the princes of the blood." I have already quoted from the *Complainte au Peuple Français*, a phrase in which the word is used still earlier than the end of "the Tumult," and applied so widely as to include the king, the princes of the blood and all malcontents, political and religious. In France, as at Geneva, the name was first applied to the liberty party; later it was limited to the Protestants.

This fact destroys the claim of those who would derive it from such words as *huguenote*, a little stone, or a small coin. Montluc, an author and warrior of Coligny's own day, says of the Huguenots, "They were so called, I know not why."—*Commentaires de Montluc.*

summate art and unquenchable thirst for power make her name still to blaze in history. And behind these stands a reserve force—a confederacy, whose clear head is at Rome and grasping hand in Spain, and whose policy will turn to account the wiles of statesmanship and the passions of the vulgar.

On the other side appear a company under the ban; a crowd of malcontents scarcely possible to be organized; a despised sect, whose preachers deliver their message in one corner and then hasten for life into another, or wander along by-roads as hawkers of tracts, flinging them into cottage and hall as they find the chance; a persecuted Church whose members look one another in the face and wonder which will go first to the dungeon or the stake; and yet there are with them princes of royal blood, nobles of high degree, chiefs in their castles, gentlemen who can muster each his hundred men on a day's notice, captains tried in war, soldiers who boast of their part in the famous battles, and a people who can pray; there are conscience, faith and God; there are the convictions of truth, the fidelities of an honest yeomanry, the sagacity of statesmen, the buoyant energies of youth, the enthusiasm felt in a new enterprise; and along with all these there is one quiet woman at Chatillon whose patriotism will start from inactivity a tremendous force; and there is in Navarre one other heroic woman who may suffer long her husband's baseness, but may yet make her mountains glorious in battle-scenes when she leads her hosts into the war for liberty and religion.

The clash will come yet more furiously between the people and the crown, between Rome and Geneva, between papist and Huguenot, when it will be seen whether the inquirer shall be crushed by the inquisitor, and the Guise triumph over the Coligny.

These sharp conflicts were to be the school for the gradual

development of a character peculiarly new and admirable—one never before in the world, and the like of which has never since been seen, unless we reckon in the same class the Puritan of Cromwell's day. It was that of the genuine Huguenot. Let us anticipate him, for his make and manner of man are being determined by the hard training which he receives. He grew up, as the tender plant, from the earth often covered with snows, trodden over by desolating troops, and fattened with human blood. The acorn was Calvinism; the oak was the Huguenot.* The model was Coligny, after whose pattern few men were moulded during the life of Condé. It was after the revived cry of "Capet" had died away, after the ambition for political power had often defeated the great Protestant party, after its chief aim had become religious liberty, and after all efforts had been mainly concentrated upon the one point of securing a free conscience and a free worship, that the real Huguenot appeared, purified by the march through the iron furnace.

He was a soldier, with the Testament in his knapsack-the Psalms on his lips, the name of Jehovah on his banner, the altar of God in his tent, the conviction of the Divine Presence ever with him on the field, and the vision of a liberated France ever before his eye. The enemies before him were in his view the enemies of God—Philistines, Moabites, the invading hosts of Sennacherib—and, as they had begun each new war for their papal idolatries, he might defend his holy religion and fire each shot with a prayer, and see with thanksgiving a routed foe. He rushed to the charge without fear; he cut right and left with unsparing severity; he made it his work until the order was given to desist. He held sacred every truce and treaty. He had mercy for

* There is certainly no historic connection between the Vaudois and the Huguenots.

the prisoner, the wounded and the dying. He forgave as generously as he had fought grievously. He boasted not of his own valour if he was the conqueror; he had no despair if he was vanquished. He murmured not if he must die for Christ and for country. Commending to God his dependent parents, or his wife and little ones, he closed his eyes, gave up his soul, and expected the foe to rifle his coat, send his armour as a trophy to the papal Leaguers and leave his body for the eagles and his bones to bleach under a sun that might yet shine upon a liberated kingdom. It was for the defence of religion that he gave himself a sacrifice.

"Honest as a Huguenot" was the proverb coined in his honour, and made current through long generations. As a neighbour, he was just and truthful; as a civilian, rare in his integrity and observance of law; as an artisan or a tradesman, he attended to his own affairs, and his goods had their value upon their very face; as an official, he could be trusted with untold gold, and happy was the Pharaoh who had such a Joseph at court. When Romanist noble or king wished for an honest man, to whom he could entrust life and property, he drew into his service a Huguenot. Even Charles IX. retained, to the last hour of his life, the old Huguenot nurse who had rocked his cradle, and he would have no other physician than Ambrose Parè, the chosen surgeon of his grandfather. Among all the Italian poisoners, Catherine knew that her children were safe when such a man dealt out the medicines. And she, too, must have her Huguenot ladies to succeed the trustworthy Madame de Chatillon and Madame de Roye. She long felt safest when Coligny was at the court. This compliment to Huguenot integrity was paid everywhere, down to the latest times.

The man of this stamp hated Rome. She was to him

the mother of abominations. She deluded souls by her harlotries; she robbed them at her masses and confession-boxes. She drove the sheep into her folds, and fleeced them with barbarous shears. And he well knew her false system, for his father had once been mired in the depths and steeped to the very eyes in her idolatries. He knew both sides of the great religious questions of his age. He exposed the evils, in the fireside talk; he drew their remedy from the Bible upon the mantel-piece. He sometimes went beyond the line of prudence, for he showed up the wretched sins of the priests to their blinded parishioners, or even bearded the vicar and gave him irritating sketches of the papacy from the times of that bad woman (as he thought), Pope Joan. He sometimes provoked an assault upon his house or a bonfire of his Protestant books, and he must take joyfully the spoiling of his goods. Even in times of peace he lived daily waiting for an arrest, a sham trial, an imprisonment or banishment to the galleys. A simple denial that he was a full believer in the doctrines of Calvin, or a silent attendance upon mass, might ensure to him an undisturbed life with his family; but he regarded the proposal as an insult, and nobly held fast to his convictions.

Henry III. had some feeble appreciation of the genius of Bernard de Palissy, the famous potter, and offered to set him free from the dungeons of the Bastille on the easy condition of giving up his faith. "My worthy friend," said the monarch, "you have now been forty-five years in the service of my mother and myself; we have suffered you to retain your religion amidst fire and slaughter. I am now so pressed by the Guises and my people that I find myself compelled to deliver you into the hands of your enemies, and to-morrow will you be burnt unless you are converted."

"Sire," answered the old man, "I am ready to give up the remainder of my life for the honour of God. You have

told me several times that you pity me, and now in turn I pity you who use the words, 'I am compelled.' It was not spoken like a king, Sire; and they are words which neither you, nor the Guises, nor the people, shall ever make me utter. Sire, I can die." By continually yielding, the monarch had become a slave; by continually acting up to his convictions, the potter had become more than a king.

The delight of the genuine Huguenot was the *prêche*—the preaching. Casaubon thus writes in his journal: "The cold and other difficulties have deprived us from attending the holy word. Oh, how can we pass a day without this benefit! . . . Again the severe winter shuts us in at home. Pardon us, O Lord! . . . At length God favours us; we have shared in the holy mysteries. . . . We all went to the temple (at Charenton), myself, my wife and a party of children, and our joy was incredible."* To such a man the pastor was the ambassador of God, respected, loved and followed as the shepherd of the flock. For mere art the Huguenot cared little; if statues were idols, he was ready to grind them to powder. He believed in the first and second commandments. Because he was not sentimental he has been described as severe; because he thought more of true doctrine than of mere ornament—more of the reality than of the outward beauty of worship—more of communion with God than of social customs and amusements—he has been charged with austerity, rigorous gravity, and a stern manner of devotion. But his was not the school for the cultivation of the softer poetic sentiments. His piety was not rose-coloured, nor fragrant of mignonette. It was oaken, the pure stuff, with a grain of its own, and unoiled and unvarnished. It was solid; perhaps rather legal than spiritual. It had in it a conscience which no man could hush with bribes, and for which he

* Ephémerides de Casaubon; Bulletin du Prot. Franc., iii. 461.

was ready to fight. Not mere joy in the heart of man, but peace with God, was the thing that he sought while a pilgrim on the earth, marching to heaven.

Perhaps the crowning glory of the genuine Huguenot was the order and worship in his own house. We saw the model in the castle at Chatillon. His sanctuary was the hearthstone. There the father was the chief, the patriarch, the pastor, the high-priest. Morning and evening, when he was not away in the wars, he read and explained the Bible. Time was given for meditation. Children were taught to be silent and think, to ask and answer questions, to repeat Psalms and recite catechisms, to give good reasons for not being papists, and to state clearly why they were Calvinists, They joined in the domestic vespers—the loud songs, the stately chants, the solemn prayers. The wife was distinguished by her fidelity, the daughters by modesty and the sons by a serious demeanour. If one was tempted and if virtue was lost, the rest were plunged into sadness; they fasted and prayed for the divine mercy. Out of such households arose those great names—Mornay and Daillé, Basnage and Saurin, Claude and Drelincourt. It was the last who said, "My bed of health and of rest will be in heaven."

Such was the true Huguenot, growing up in the rough times of the first civil wars to praise God for the edict of Nantes, and to bear the terrible stroke of its repeal. It was but a young character in the party of which Coligny was the real leader. In the other party was the forming character of the Leaguer and the political Jesuit.* But this digression must end.

Catherine de Medici saw these two parties growing up from their infancy into giants. More than ever did she

* Puaux has given me the hint for the attempted portrait of the Huguenot.

wish to be borne aloft on the shoulders of both. She was her own spy in the Guisard camp; she must now have a word with the Huguenots. She sent for the minister Chandieu to come and make known the causes of Protestant discontent, and to suggest the means of peace. But Chandieu was not in Paris; doubtless he was away upon a missionary tour. He had already sent a paper to Catherine, and it had fallen into the hands of Lorraine, who asked, "Why do you put yourself in connection with these rebels?"

"I do it, sir," she replied with much spirit, "to get at their designs. If you desire it, I will call hither Regnier de la Planche, a Huguenot, one of Marshal Montmorency's confidants, and while we talk about Protestant affairs you can be hidden behind the tapestries and listen to your own satisfaction."

The cardinal assented. The man whom she called was a Parisian gentleman, a strong Calvinist, who was an ornament to his profession of faith—learned, serious, striking his point in every sentence he spoke, at home in theology, and not likely to lose himself in the windings of politics.* "It is a *ruse* of the Guises," thought he, and he declined to appear. Catherine insisted, begged; now persuaded, now menaced. At length he came. He went right to the heart of the subject at once. "There are, madame," said he (the tapestry hiding the clerical eavesdropper)—"there are among the Protestants the Huguenots of religion and the Huguenots of state; the first demand an end to the persecutions—the second, the expulsion of the Guises, as 'strangers,' from the crown-councils. You yourself have an interest in keeping them within just bounds, for you are the mother of infant princes." The wincing cardinal had patience.

* He is the reputed author of a Histoire de l'État de France . . . sous le Regne de François II., 1574, and admired for his impartiality.

"It is unjust," replied the queen-mother, "to speak thus of men who have rendered so great services to the state. Is it astonishing that I should be attached to princes whom my late husband esteemed so highly?" Here was dust for the eyes of the cardinal which his veil could not exclude.

"Great services, indeed! It is their shrewd policy to report everywhere that the Amboise affair was a rebellion against the crown. They know what they have to fear—"

"Enough of this. Tell me what you know about the conspirators—those still in our hands."

"Madame, I am not a spy" (did the curtains rustle?); "you invited me to tell you what course you should pursue in regard to the Guises—"

"Be cautious; you are at court." La Planche left the room, found an officer waiting for him and went to prison.

The cardinal dared not revenge himself upon La Planche. "He is an honest fellow, after all," said he. "I am rather the wiser for his blunt words. Inexperienced in court matters, he knows not the art of talking voluminously and yet saying nothing. Let him go." At the end of four days the candid Huguenot went home with a paragraph for his history.*

Happy for France if there had been a John Knox then at the head of her Reform! a man bold in the face of royalty, scathing upon usurpers, reading the tendency of political schemes so that he could utter strange prophecies, seizing the pen and scaring his enemies into their retreats, taking the pulpit and making the very walls tremble—earnest, pithy, now colloquial, now satirical, often coarse, but always to the point and always successful. By his addresses and sermons he made public opinion, roused the popular

* Haag, France Protestante; Puaux, Hist. de la Reform. Mémoires de Castelnau.

heart, and then directed the public will.* In France no such man appeared. Calvin was too far away to seize just the moment for a victory. There was too little enlightened opinion. There was much to inflame men's minds; little to guide them into calm seas of prosperity. There was spirit enough, but it was military, rather than moral. It was the call to arms, rather than the tearful call to repentance. It was the fight for liberty, rather than the good fight of faith. A resistless Knox was needed, even at the court of Condé.

The Admiral Coligny adopted measures more in harmony with his principles. He wished for honourable peace and her more glorious triumphs. He believed in a God who could bring the Guises to naught, or who permitted them to rule for some great purpose. He was in communication with Calvin, who persisted in restraining the Huguenots from acts of war, and who, snatching up the pen pointed for "to-morrow's sermon," wrote, "Unless I had interposed, many districts would have been involved in a dreadful conflagration. . . . An excess of confidence has turned the heads of our people. For in opposition to what we have always forbidden, they seize upon the [Romish] churches or preach in public places. The brethren sent by us make this excuse, that they are dragged forward by necessity, as there is no private dwelling capable of holding four thousand people. . . . The events of futurity are in the hands of God."

Coligny had proved to the court that his grief over the late plots was sincere. He and Andelot sought to be dismissed and return to their homes. "We cannot spare you yet," said Catherine, who had caressed the Chatillons in order to annoy the Guises. "Why do you wish to go?"

"If I had no more to do," said Coligny, "than to retire and pray for my persecuted brethren, it would seem enough

* Tytler, Hist. Scotland, vol. vii. 121.

for the rest of my life, unless the present edicts be annulled." Had he seen a copy of the recent instructions to the provincial governors? Like this they ran, for the king's letters are still in existence: "I command you to transport yourself to all suspected places, and learn from good Catholics the names of those who are present at the preachings; to seize the preachers and hang them without form of trial by the provost-marshal; to put all Huguenots who publicly avow their religion into the hands of justice, and judge them incontinently; if the assistants at such meetings be armed, to hang or cut them to pieces; and in regard to such as shall not be arrested, the king leaves it to your discretion to disfranchise them, confiscate their property, demolish their houses, and fine them as you see fit!" Rapacious agents would see fit to enrich themselves by sparing those who would pay largely to be undisturbed, and by robbing all who were firm in the faith.

"If you cannot spare me," said Coligny, "you must allow me to plead for my friends. I ask that Michael de l'Hôpital be appointed chancellor of France, in place of the deceased Olivier." Catherine was not quite surprised. He insisted; it would go far to satisfy the disaffected people. And his untold hope was that it would make the late edicts as good as a dead letter. If there be outrageous laws, blessed is it when the chief of all lawyers will not put them in force. He earnestly pressed his suit. She would think about it, and she did think. She thought that she saw a new means of dividing and reigning. This female Machiavel wanted to overreach the Cardinal of Lorraine. She acted cautiously, and again summoned Coligny to break to him the result.

"I have at last gained the point which you so strongly urged," said Catherine, "and De l'Hôpital is appointed chancellor. It has been granted to silence my pertinacity."

"The ministry, then, have concluded that he was not engaged in the plot of Amboise?"

"No more than I was,* or your uncle Montmorency, for you know we have all been suspected. De l'Hôpital will befriend you and your brethren, especially if his wife be a Huguenot."

We covet space for a full portrait of the character of this man, whom Brantome calls "the greatest chancellor, the most learned, the most dignified and the most beloved ever known to France."

This man, providentially raised up for a crisis, was the son of a physician in Auvergne, and born about the year 1505. His father was suspected of a share in the treason of the Constable Bourbon, and young Michael had to suffer for it. While studying law at Toulouse, he was thrown into prison, where he learned to have compassion for those of a later day, who were in deeper dungeons for heresy. Proved innocent, he was released and joined his father at Milan. Still in danger of arrest in a foreign land, he disguised himself as a muleteer and went to Padua. There he took up the law again. After various travels and a return to France, he laid aside the robes of an advocate and frequented the court. He rose upon his merits. Important missions were entrusted to him. He was sent to a council at Cologne, held for the reform of abuses in the Church, and got a deeper insight into the errors of Rome. In all his offices, as treasurer, councillor, envoy, superintendent, he sought only to do well his duty and be just to all men. Others grew rich by public plunder; he had not always the

* The historians report the suspicions then current, that Catherine was somewhat involved in the scheme. She would not have objected to the rescue of her son from the Guises. She had urged Montmorency to bring forward Antony Navarre to supplant them, and yet she had assented to their appointment.—*Bayle.*

bread for the morrow. Laborious, grave, philosophic, he was still a poet; courageous, firm, humane, he was to go forward and remove some of the obstacles to free thought and worship. As a young magistrate he was a severe censor of the abuses in the magistracy. One of these abuses was the injustice shown in the pretended trial of those accused of heresy; against this he revolted, and still the very chief of persecutors respected him. Chancellor Olivier loved him as a son. Catherine de Medici saw in him a man who, without having a price, would counteract the power of the Lorraines. The cardinal hoped to manage him if he must be made chancellor of state, for he had once patronized him. What a juncture of affairs! Catherine willing to do well, only because the cardinal wished to do ill.

Bayle says the Guises hoped "he would do all they had a mind to. They were mistaken; for he had laid down as his maxim the good of the kingdom and the true interests of the king, his master. 'Tis true, he was obliged to use address, because if he openly opposed the designs of the Guises, he had not been able to remedy the confusions of France. He was forced, then, to swim betwixt two streams, and by that prudent conduct he turned off some storms which threatened the kingdom, and found means to do good service to his country as much as the miserable condition of the times would permit him. . . . There is no doubt but that if he had been sole manager of these things he would have procured a full toleration for the Protestants." One of his frequent sayings to those who were alarmed at the evils of the day, was, "Patience, patience; all will go well." His wife was Mary Morin, a daughter of the lieutenant-criminal*—the same man who had almost seized young

* Homme sans Dieu ne conscience, lequel ayant fait mourin tant de fideles.—*Mémoires de Condé*, xiv.

Calvin, when he escaped from his college window and fled from Paris. Calvin must have been pleased to know that she was a Protestant. Nor was he far from it. Brantome says, "He was reckoned a Huguenot, though he went to mass; but it was said at court, 'God keep us from the mass of Monsieur de l'Hôpital.'" This was hardly true of him when to his hands was first entrusted the great seal of France.*

"And I have a commission for you, Monsieur l'Admiral," said Catherine—"one that will please you. Go down among your favourite Normans, and inquire the real cause of their discontent; their commotions are alarming. You have great influence over them, for they are nearly all your brethren in the faith."

Never had Coligny gone upon a more delightful mission. He had done much to extend the gospel in Normandy, which had long been called "Little Germany," on account of its Protestantism. He found his brethren meeting by thousands in the open air for the worship of God. Even several French priests were secret Calvinists. "What," he asked of the wiser men—"what are the causes of the disaffection toward the government? Why are the Normans ready to spring to arms?"

"They are but two," was the reply. "The first is the persecutions waged against us as Protestants; the second is the rigid tyranny of the king's ministers. We cannot supplicate our king; the Guises deny us the right of access and of petition."

"Draw up a petition to his majesty; I will have it presented." The admiral sent letters to Catherine, in which he frankly reported the causes of the popular disaffection,

* Nouvelles Recherches Historiques sur la Vie et les Ouvrages du Chancellor de l'Hôpital; par A. H. Taillandier, Paris, 1861. Œuvres de Condorcet, Eloge sur de l'Hôpital.

and strongly urged her to take the administration of affairs in her own hands—advice which she was ready enough to follow.

Not yet was the Cardinal of Lorraine satisfied with power for himself and for Rome. He openly made another effort to establish the Spanish mode of the inquisition in France. The late conspiracy had proved to his mind the need of it. The Chancellor de l'Hôpital bravely resisted it. He pointed to Spain as a land of woe on account of this engine of tyranny. It would cause a revolution. No heroic people would endure it. The struggle was sharp, and the chancellor saved his country from the curse. But he was obliged to compromise. The result was the edict of Romorantin, named from the town whence it was dated in May, 1560. By it all heresies were to be judged in an ecclesiastical court; magistrates and parliaments were forbidden to meddle with the subject. The principle was right, but Roman prelates took advantage of it.

"What have we gained?" asked such men as Coligny, who saw no relief in the new edict. "We are still in the power of the bishops; we cannot assemble publicly for religious worship; if we meet secretly, we shall be declared guilty of high treason, and great rewards are offered to all informers."

"Patience! all will be well," replied the chancellor. "We have staved off the inquisition; this is something. We have dissatisfied all parties—Catholics, Protestants, politicians and councillors—that is still more. We have laid down a great stepping-stone to wider toleration; stand on that now, and the next one will be higher still, and thus we may go on until we rise into liberty of conscience." Two important measures were now introduced by the chancellor—one for the State, the other for the Church.

The chancellor had the next stone ready. Forty years

had passed since France had beheld the shadow of a fair, full representative assembly called by the king. Coligny had asked it; part of the Amboise scheme was to demand it; the whole country was urging an assembly of the states-general. De l'Hôpital said: "It is too much to demand at present—too high a step to be made—a stone or two first. Let us ask for an assembly of the notables."

"Agreed," said Coligny. "I shall have some papers ready." The Guises gave their assent, thinking to remain masters of the situation. Letters-patent were sent to all the ministers of the crown, the princes of the blood and such of the nobles and knights as were illustrious for birth or influence. They were summoned to meet on the twentieth of August, at Fontainebleau.

A new thing was seen under the sun of France: the king was surrounded by a large military force when he came to the palace of the old Fontaine de Belle Eau. Why such troops? Was he the first French king who feared his people? Or did his uncles think to awe the nobles into silence? The new mode added no new star to the fame of the Guises. The Duke of Guise was not content with this novelty; he posted troops on all the roads in the neighbourhood. But what was his surprise when he saw Montmorency and his sons, with eight hundred gentlemen on horseback, filing down the avenues that led to the castle! Then came the Colignys, with their suite and nine hundred of the lesser gentry. But the Bourbon princes did not appear. De Thou tells us that they had agreed with Coligny never to meet at the same place with him. Quite likely they did not relish his speeches and his moderation. Their secret enterprises were enough to render it imprudent for them to attend. The assembly opened. The chancellor hesitated a moment in his long, wearying speech, and then waked up all slumberers by saying, "The kingdom is sick;

it must be cured. There are divisions in religion, disorder in the provinces, insubordination everywhere. Something must be done for the people." This was quite enough to ponder for one day, together with the call of the Duke of Guise for an army of suppression, and his brother's sad report of a lean treasury. Who would pay the soldiers?

No sooner had the second session opened than Admiral Coligny stepped forward to the throne and, bending one knee, presented two petitions to the king; then, raising his voice so that all might hear him, he said, "that having been sent into Normandy by his majesty's orders, to inquire into the causes of the troubles in that province, he had found that the first and main reason was the persecutions on account of religion. Great numbers in that part of the country, professing the Reformed religion, had requested him to present their humble petitions to the king, which he now did, not thinking it right to disappoint the wishes of so many worthy people."*

All present were astonished at such boldness, for he was running into the face of death. The king had not been taught his lesson beforehand; he therefore received the papers and ordered them to be read. In the first the petitioners renounced all part in such enterprises as that of Amboise. The second was the more important; it was headed, "The supplication of the faithful in sundry provinces, who call on the name of God and desire to live according to the true rule of faith."

All ears were attentive to these sentences: "We confess that we never so well understood our duty to your majesty as since we have learned it from the holy doctrines preached to us. . . . Be pleased to allow us temples† of our own in

* Vita Colinii; Lacratelle; De Thou.

† The term used by the French Protestants, who were not allowed to call their houses of public worship "churches."

every city and town, according to our numbers, so that we may assemble by day, hear the word of God, offer prayers for the state and receive the sacraments as ordained by our Lord, without being molested by those who know not the truth in God. . . . Having such places, if we meet elsewhere, hold nightly assemblies, or do anything contrary to the public peace, we are content to be punished as seditious and rebellious. . . . If it be desirable, we will consent to pay larger taxes than other of your subjects, in order to show how wrongfully we are accused of a wish to exempt ourselves from tribute." Was ever anything fairer offered?

"The petitions are not signed," said the secretary. Hasty men were ready to move that the papers be destroyed and the admiral punished for his fraud.

"It is true," said the deliberate Coligny, "they bear no names. Therefore I at first refused to present them. But what was the answer of the people? They said, 'Gain us but leave to meet, and in a single day you shall have fifty thousand signatures!'"

"And I," retorted the Duke of Guise, "will find one hundred thousand men, whom I will head, who will sign the contrary with their own blood!"

At these words there was no small stir in the assembly. But the Guisards could not have their own way. The king requested the opinions of the members on the memorials. Two prelates were present, who had been in Rome and visited Protestant countries, noting the differences between them.

Jean Montluc arose; all were silent to the voice of the bishop of Valence, as he said: "The doctrine, Sire, which so many of your subjects have embraced is not the hasty produce of three or four short days, but it has been ripening gradually for thirty years. It is preached by three or

four hundred ministers, skilful in letters, diligent in their calling, of modest, grave and holy manners, detesting all vice, hating all avarice, willing to die for their principles, and ever bearing on their lips the blessed name of Jesus Christ—a name of sufficient power to unseal the dullest ear and soften the hardest heart. These preachers, Sire, having found your people as sheep without a shepherd, have been received with joy and heard with eagerness."

He then began with the popes; showed how they had turned their attention to war and broken their promises; touched upon the conduct of the kings and officers of justice in their cruel treatment of the people; and then came to the bishops: "They are, for the most part, idle, forgetful of their account to God, devoted to the collection of their revenues, and spending them in vicious and scandalous toys, so that while the flame was blazing in their dioceses more than forty bishops at a time have been idling in Paris. Sees have been conferred on children and persons utterly ignorant. Priests have been avaricious, buying their offices and doing nothing. Send your money to Rome, and you will have sent back to you any number of them, made of barbers, lacqueys and scullions, all gaping for a benefice. . . . These are the excellent methods which we have chosen to promote peace and unity in our Church!"

He admitted that some of the Huguenots were mere politicians, but of those who were sincere and pious, he said, "Look to their lives and their deaths if you would know their motives. Notice their zeal to find the one true way of salvation; and, having found it, they set all else at naught, and for it endure all loss of worldly goods, all deaths by the most excruciating tortures. Many who would never have heard of the doctrine, when they see men die for it, resolve to search whether it be good or bad; and, having so searched, are prepared to die for it themselves,

and to follow in the train of those martyrs who have gone before them." *

He suggested two means of resolving the difficulty. One was the promotion of true worship, especially at court, that it might be an example for the nation. "Let your majesty see that the Scriptures be everywhere read and explained. Let the gospel be preached daily in your own house, so that those who say that God's holy name is never heard there may be silenced." He then turned to Catherine and Mary Stuart, saying, "Pardon me, ladies, if I entreat you to order your damsels to sing no more foolish songs, but the Psalms of David and spiritual hymns; and remember that the eye of God is over all and in every place, but he looks graciously where his name is praised." The other remedy was a general, free council, or, if the pope refused it, a national assembly of the clergy. This latter measure was boldly advocated by Marillac, Archbishop of Vienne, who seemed to forget all edicts against free speech, and spoke like a Luther: "We must prepare for such a council. We must reform ourselves. We must fast and confess our sins. Both factions must lay down their arms." A great change had taken place since Du Bourg had suffered, or these men would have gone to prison, and De l'Hôpital with them.

The Admiral Coligny was emboldened by such speeches. At the proper time he rose to urge again the prayer of the Normans. He complained of the mode in which the young king was trained by his guardians and surrounded by a large military force, so that he treated his subjects as enemies and did not seek to live in their hearts and affections. The young monarch needed a better mode of education.

"What!" exclaimed the Duke of Guise, with his usual insolence, "does the king need tutors and governors?"

* Harangue de l'Evesque de Valence, filling twenty-two crowded pages in the Mémoires de Condé.

"He has them," was the spirited reply, "in his advisers and bodyguard. The Bishop of Valence has just recommended a more liberal training."

"Yes, surround him with heretics and your Normans will be satisfied," said the duke. "But we want no such innovations. For my part, I will adhere to the old method, whatever a thousand councils may say. The king is already educated in the practice of every virtue, and besides, if he need any further instruction, his mother is fully competent to the task."

The admiral still had hopes of Catherine, and yielded to the last remark. He again interceded for the Protestants: "Give them temples, and then send men to listen at their doors, and punish them if they utter rebellious sentiments; give them liberty of conscience, and you will be astonished at their loyalty and their freedom from all violence." A fair proposal.

"Is it reasonable," asked the Cardinal of Lorraine, "that the king should bend to these people? Let them bow to him. The king cannot yield to them without the risk of being everlastingly damned! Are they loyal? Only on condition that the king be of their sect or approve of it. I glory in their hatred" (and then aside); "there are twenty-two of their libels against me, now on my table, and I shall preserve them with great care." He professed to pity those who had gone astray, and to be willing to lay down his life to win them back! He hoped that the clergy would reform. He exhorted the bishops to report all abuses to the king, but he was careful to say, "We need no general council; let the bishops have their proper authority, and they will correct all real abuses." He denounced the petition as "seditious, impudent, rash, heretical and fanatical."

"Who has made it sedition for a suffering people to pray their king for relief?" replied Coligny with warmth. "You

make it as criminal as for them to pray to God. Verily, these are evil times. A man who offers his very life to his country must not ask for arrears of pay; the minister of finance calls it impudence, and threatens to hang him! A good Christian must not beg the privilege of worshipping his God in the broad light of day; he is impudent, and he too must be hanged!"

"Have we here demanded that the gibbet be erected?" asked the cardinal, who dared not betray the wound that he had received.

"It is not necessary," replied Coligny. "The gibbet is raised already. Hundreds are to-day being hung, because certain men have judged them to be impudent, seditious and heretical."*

The dispute grew so warm that the king called for order. Quiet was not easily restored. Coligny was supported by a host which alarmed his foes. If there had remained one tie of the old friendship between him and the Duke of Guise, it was now completely severed. "One of the strongest bands which served still to hold together the distracted kingdom was ruptured in a moment," says La Place. We saw it broken three years before. The Guises were defeated, but not conquered; they had another scheme on their table. The four most liberal-minded men in the assembly—Montluc, Marillac, De l'Hôpital and Coligny—gained their chief

* Vita Colinii; Perau, Vies de Coligny, de Card. Lorraine, de Guise. The charge of impudence might not lie against the Huguenots alone. When Blaise Montluc entreated the Gascons to obey the king, they haughtily replied, "What king? We are the king? The one you mention is a baby-king. We will give him the rod, and teach him to earn his living like other people." The Guisards were quite as seditious, ever ready to shake their fists in the king's face. No royal edict was generally regarded as a law; they who pleased set it at defiance. Almost every man kept the *habeas corpus* in his own hands. Convenience was the usual measure of loyalty.

object. It was the distribution of power, the acknowledgment of the people's right to be heard, and a footing laid for freer discussion. The States-general (nobles, clergy and commons) should meet in December at Orleans, and steps were taken for a religious conference at Poissy. These were great achievements.

There was new work now for the Guises. They must first entice the Bourbon princes to the court; then they must destroy everybody who was dangerous to themselves. "I can set the snare," said the Cardinal of Lorraine. "Let the king send a kind invitation to Navarre for the princes to visit the court and attend the national assembly."

"Well devised," said his brother. "The Count de Crussol is just enough of a Huguenot to carry it, with secret instructions." This was but three days after the adjournment of the council at Fontainebleau. The messenger departed. But Coligny heard of it. Was it through Madame Crussol, a lady of honour to Queen Catherine? She was an inquirer for the true religion, of whom good reports soon reached Calvin. Coligny asked his sister, Madame de Roye, to give warning to the prince, her son-in-law, and say that he must be prepared to justify himself at the next assembly, if he should resolve to attend.

"I have a rat-trap* for the whole of them," said the cardinal, as if a massacre were a huge joke. "Here is an old formula of faith drawn up by the Sorbonne in 1542, which needs to be revived by bathing it in blood. It requires that every person shall hold the great doctrines of the Church, such as the mass, Virgin Mary—"

"Never mind the doctrines," said the duke. "I am no theologian; my business, as a warrior, is to see them obeyed. How will you set your trap?"

* Adding burlesque to atrocity, he called his measure "the rat-trap for the Huguenots."—*De Felice.*

"It must be signed by the king, the whole court, the officers of state, the nobility, the knights, the clergy and everybody, down as far as we choose to go. Each must take oath to observe it, and to treat as an enemy every one who does not sign it, without regard to father, mother, wife, brother, sister, relative or friend. Those who refuse to take this oath shall forfeit all offices, honours, estates and even life, without more than one day of mercy."*

"This will thin out the court amazingly," said the duke. "It will sweep the country clean of the rabble who live like the Genevese."

"It will catch the Colignys, for whom it is particularly revived," replied Lorraine. "The admiral must be got out of the way, before another chance is had for him to drag in his petitions and to work on the mind of a king who does not know enough to let his ministers keep him from blunders. We might even dispense with his brother Odet, for he is too honest for our use, if he be not a raving Huguenot by this time. They will, of course, refuse to sign it, and then we will teach them the cost of being a heretic." The malice is apparent.

"Set the trap," added the duke, "and I will send out marshals and troops to scour the provinces and drive the rebels into it, or make spoil of those who will not be driven. Your treasury is low; expect a full stream to pour into it." This greed of gain was one of the motives in the great persecutions.

"We must have money before the spoils come in," said the cardinal. "The clergy must raise it, for they are deeply interested in the measure. If this source fail, your

* This formula required that if any one refusing to sign it should be pardoned, he should thereafter wear a robe of those colours adopted by the Spanish Inquisition to mark its criminals, and thus be spotted with perpetual infamy.

armies will seize upon the treasures of churches, and without scruple convert relics, crosses, silver candlesticks, and even chalices, into French crowns." Religion was not a leading motive.

Such was the conspiracy of the Guises and the Guisards.* The Bourbon princes were to be the first victims, then Coligny and Andelot, then the Protestant nobility and people, until the extermination of "heresy" was complete. A prison was already chosen for the Prince of Condé in Orleans; and one of its towers was named "the Admiral," by anticipation. The formula was to be offered for signatures on the next Christmas—a document which, De Serres declares, "no man of the religion would for a thousand livres have approved or signed."

But we must overtake the Count of Crussol, who was, no doubt, ignorant of evil schemes. He gave to the King of Navarre the letter of Francis II., addressed to "Mon Oncle," and declaring that he had not believed the Bourbon princes guilty in the affair of Amboise, for he loved them too well; but lately his ears were filled with bad reports about the Prince of Condé, and he wished to give him an opportunity to clear himself of such charges. "Therefore, mon oncle, in whom I have perfect confidence, please bring him to me yourself—a matter which I would trust to no one else. I shall be happy to find him innocent. . . . But I assure you that, if he refuses to obey me, I shall let him understand that I am king."†

This half-threatening invitation caused no little excitement at Nerac. "Do not move an inch in that direction," said Queen Jeanne, "or you are ruined."

"If you do not go," whispered Crussol aside, "you are most certain of ruin. A Flemish army will be sent down

* "La faction des Guisards."—*Bénoit, Edit. de Nantes.*

† Given in Mém. de Condé.

to attack you on one side, and Philip of Spain engages to march upon you on the other." A secret agent had been sent to Philip II. to carry out this part of the programme.

Still the princes hesitated. Then came letters from the court assuring them "that no harm should happen." Condé was warned from all quarters. His wife wrote from the court: "Every step you take will bring you nearer to destruction. If war is made upon you, it is better for you to die gloriously at the head of an army than to perish in shame upon a scaffold." Beza entreated him not to go. Queen Jeanne begged him with tears to remain, saying, "It is your salvation to stay here; but, if you will depart, march with a force that will compel the Lorraines to respect the august blood of Bourbon."

"There is no risk," argued Condé, until the proofs of danger could not be denied. Then he generously declared: "The staking of my life is of little moment. I must save my brother from losing his kingdom; and therefore will go to the national assembly, for which I have so often made request." Certain of the Huguenots made splendid offers of support, not aware of the plots against themselves. Calvin protested against the prince's departure. It was in vain. Antony was too timid to remain at home; Condé was too brave to decline. They started for Orleans. On the slow journey they were met by prominent Huguenots, who entreated them to turn back; and, when they refused, these gentlemen offered large bodies of troops for their defence. Messengers came with fresh warnings; perhaps Catherine secretly sent the word, "It will be death to appear at court." Antony grew faint-hearted, but Condé pushed forward, and with a large force of soldiers they reached Orleans the last day of October.

The gates were barred and the walls guarded, as if a foe were coming. As they rode through the streets to the

castle, a double line of soldiers gazed on the Bourbon princes. They demanded their right to enter the court-yard on horseback, but they were compelled to alight and enter through a wicket-gate. It must have reminded them of their former icy reception by the court at Saint Germain. Catherine shrieked when they were led into her presence, and "shed crocodile tears," says La Planche. The king said to Condé, "You are accused of treason, and must answer for yourself." Was not the accuser a worse traitor toward him?

"I am ready to prove my innocence," replied the prince, with self-possession. He then flung back the charge of treason upon his accusers.

"If you wish to be heard in your own defence, we will proceed according to the forms of law," said the king, who turned to his captains and ordered Condé to be arrested. On his way to prison he met his brother, the Cardinal of Bourbon, a courtier as weak as his shadow, and said: "Very well, sir; with your fine assurances you have led your brother to the scaffold!" The cardinal only answered with his tears.

"Will you want your horse?" asked his page, when they reached the gate. The prince replied, "I shall never want him more."

The prison had been put in order weeks before; the brave prince entered it, and was denied all communication with his regal brother, and even his wife, except attended with witnesses. His mother-in-law, Madame de Roye, was also arrested at her house in Anicy, thrust into prison and her papers and letters brought to court.

Andelot had retired to his estates, whence he might escape to England, if danger followed him. The aged Montmorency took alarm and feigned illness. But Coligny, now at Chatillon awaiting an heir, bade farewell to

his heroic wife, as if he might never see his family again. "Have the child baptized," said he, "by the true ministers of the Word." Odet joined him. They were cordially received by Catherine, who wished to set them against the Guises. The admiral felt that he was needed to intercede for the prince. He boldly used every possible means, being urgent night and day. The wife of Condé "was day and night before his majesty, with abundant tears, entreating to see and speak to her husband;" but she received threats for her compassions. She and her friends looked to the admiral as their only defender. A commission was appointed to try the prince. Its president was the father of the historian De Thou. "I deny the power of the court," said Condé, when brought before it. "I demand that I shall be tried in full parliament, and by my peers." But the trial went on. He was found guilty of treason; not in the Amboise affair alone, but in his attempts to rouse the southern Huguenots, seize the treasuries and towns, and in the name of his king put on foot an army against the Guises. One of his secret agents, Le Sague, had been arrested, and under torture had pretended to reveal a vast conspiracy, in which the Montmorencies and Chatillons had been accused of having a part. The Vidame of Chartres, who had captured and lost Lyons, was already in prison, from which death alone would release him. Condé, however, was the only one now under trial, and his condemnation was a matter of course. The sentence was signed by all the judges except one. Let him be known by all the world. He was the Count of Sancerre, a Romanist and a friend of the Guises. But he persisted in his refusal to act unjustly. The king urged him; he replied: "I will rather place my head beneath the axe of the executioner than bequeath to my children the infamy of reading their father's name subscribed to a capital sentence against a prince whose descend-

ants may one day become their king." He rose and left the room.

"He is in his dotage," said the Cardinal of Lorraine to the king. "He forsakes his place; ignore him." The king declared that the sentence was fixed; on the tenth of December he should be executed. It was the very day for the assembly to open.

"Patience; all will be well," we hear the chancellor saying to the admiral, adding that his name must go upon the paper of sentence. He delayed to sign it, giving as an excuse that "he was not very well."

The prince was cheerful and courageous. A priest was sent to his prison to perform mass. "I have come to Orleans for very different purposes," said Condé, and dismissed him. The Duke of Guise was visited by his mother-in-law, the Duchess Renée, a Protestant whom he cared not to see just then. She sharply reproved him for his part in the horrible business, and declared that if she had come before the prince was seized she would have prevented it. She was the grand aunt of the king. "I warn you," she said to Guise, "to desist henceforth from offering violence to princes of the royal stock, for such wounds will bleed long, and it will never end well with those who begin such assaults." *

And yet a bolder plot was ripening. Antony could not be reached by law; he must be assassinated. His ears were filled with rumours. He was in horror, now of poison at a feast, now of being shot at the chase, again of being stabbed at court. It is said that the king had been furnished with a dagger, and on some visit he was to murder him. Antony heard of it, and, for once in his life, danger seemed to fill him with courage. He was invited to meet the king. He then said to his captain: "I am going where my death has

* Perau, Vies de Condé, de Coligny.

been sworn. If I perish, take the coat I now wear and send it to my wife; since my son* is not old enough to take vengeance for my death, let her send it to the Christian princes, who will avenge me." He then entered the royal chamber, and the Cardinal of Lorraine shut the door behind him. The king made some insulting remark, but from fear or pity gave no signal for the desperate deed. Antony returned unhurt. It is reported that the Duke of Guise, hidden behind the door, saw him go forth alive and exclaimed of his king, "O the greatest coward that ever lived! What a prince we have!" †

Poor Francis, the life worried out of him, was hardly a king. The acts of his reign were scarcely his own. He was the tool of Catherine when he wrote to the Bishop of Limoges, "The Church will never enjoy peace unless a general council be held. The council of Trent is doing nothing for the Protestants, and we ought to try every means to bring them into a conference with our bishops. No matter what the pope threatens, let us have a council." Even Lorraine seemed to give way: "Prayers should be allowed in French and the Psalms sung in church." The warrior, Gaspard Tavannes, in a wondrous fit of common sense, wrote in the same drift: "No mass in French—no change in ceremonies, but yet I confess that the people would be much more stirred up to devotion if they heard in their own tongue the chants of the priests and the Psalms sung in the churches."

But Francis was a tool in the hands of the Duke of Guise when he ordered Tavannes to raise troops in Dauphiny and "cut the rebels in pieces." The Reformed had obeyed the edicts so far as to meet no more secretly in barns and woods, but they had put on a bolder face and held

* The future Henry IV.

† L'Etoile, Mém. pour l'Hist.

their meetings openly. "There is nothing I desire more," the king was made to say, "than to have you chastise them without mercy. Tear them up by the roots, so that no fresh ones may arise." Still later, the order to Barthe was, "Catch the ministers and punish them soundly. Hang them without trial. If any people dare meet for worship, fall on them with the sword. I beg of you, cousin, sweep the country clear of such rabble as disturb the world." Perhaps the letters were not really sent, but they show the cruel designs. At Nismes the persecution was so furious that Marshal Villars reported, "The heresy extends every day. I have more prisoners than I can put to death."

But the wavering cannot evade death. On the life of no other man in France was so much, just then, dependent, as on that of the feeble king. One morning he was starting for a chase in the forests, when a sharp pain ran through his ear, like the fatal lance that pierced his father's head. Ambrose Paré gave him up as hopeless. His room was beset with those who had some presage of their doom if they could not wring from him the word they wanted. "Have Condé executed at once," was the demand of the Guises. Catherine refused, by Coligny's urgency. She never wished to do anything in a crisis. All parties were rapidly changing their programme. Antony of Navarre was suddenly popular. His gray beard and portly form were more attractive than his rich ear-rings and effeminate trappery. Catherine took him into favour, and bargained with him for the regency over the next child-king. The gasping Francis breathed the appointment—a new policy came into being.

It was the fifth of December, five days before the time intended for Condé's death. The agonies of the king were ending. At his bedside stood Coligny, who watched the royal lips grow rigid, and then turned to the courtiers,

among whom Guise was standing, and said; "Gentlemen, the king is dead; let that teach us how to live." Sublime words!

When he could be spared, Coligny retired to his room. In deep thought he sat before the fire, his toothpick in his mouth as usual, and his feet quite on the embers. He could see some good changes coming. One of his suite noticed his abstraction and caught him by the arm, saying, "Sir, you have been in a brown study long enough; your boots are on fire." He replied, "Ah, Fontaine, only a week ago you and I would have thought ourselves well off with the loss of a leg each, and now we have lost only a pair of boots. It is a good exchange."

It is said that Catherine showed only a formal regret, and sent her son to his tomb with the scantiest honours. It was not malice that prompted the better Huguenots and Reformers to regard the king's death as a marvellous deliverance for them and divine judgment upon their persecutors. At one period of his reign Calvin wrote to "the brethren of France," saying, "While you see the poor flock of Christ scattered by wolves, resort to him, praying him to strengthen you, and to change them into harmless lambs. You will not get strength by murmuring and gnashing your teeth against the tyrants, as some do who seek not the refuge to which persecution ought to drive us. The Lord is a good protector."* The next year he wrote, "When nearly all men were paralyzed by the torrent of fury let loose upon France, lo! all of a sudden, God revealed his arm. The death of the young king must change everything. . . . Did you ever read or hear of anything more opportune? The evils had reached such a pitch that there was no remedy, when God, who pierced the eye of the father, struck the ear of the son. . . . One can hardly believe how some people

* Letter of November, 1559.

exult. They wish to transform the whole world in an instant, and, because I do not countenance their folly, they charge me with supineness."*

Beza says: "The sword was at our throats when the Lord rose up and carried off that miserable boy by a death as foul as it was unforeseen. No honours were paid his corpse, and the enemy of the Lutherans was buried like a Lutheran."

The Prince of Condé was amusing himself with a game when the word came to him that the king was dead. Without a change of countenance he finished it. Soon his brother was made lieutenant-general in place of the Duke of Guise; Charles IX. was king, Catherine was regent, Montmorency and Coligny were in high favour, and better days seemed to have come. The prison door was open, and Condé was told to go free. "I cannot go and leave my honour here," he said. "What is liberty without an acknowledgment of my innocence?" But Montmorency advised him to take what he could get. The prince was soon mounted upon his horse, riding into Picardy as its governor.

What a change! On one December day Condé is within a step of a scaffold, and the Calvinists are marked for the massacre; in the night death comes and strikes the keystone from the arch which supports the power of the Guises; the next, Condé and his brother of Navarre are within a step of the throne, the three Colignys are taken into royal favour, the Huguenots may be relieved of burdens and groans, the aged Montmorency may walk more stately than ever at Chantilly, and the chancellor more boldly propose gentle measures at the council-board.

And the Guises must retire and wait for years to renew their dream of conquest.† The duke wrathily sees the va-

* Letters to Sulcer and Sturm, Dec. 11 and 16, 1560. The amount of French history in the fourth volume of Letters is remarkable.

† "Although the policy of the Guisean faction was, for the moment,

cillating Antony Bourbon made lieutenant-general; the grandmastership reverts to Montmorency. France seems to be under a strange spell of "Huguenoterie." The cardinal's trap has failed; rather has he fallen into his own net—the just fate of the wicked. It was set especially for Condé and Coligny, and now they are more free than ever before. It was hard but righteous. Catherine well knew the cardinal's scheme was a wicked one, for she had helped to form it. But she could relieve herself from the toils of the net by a sacrifice of the chief inventor. He saw his power blasted. "In chagrin," says Brantome, "he quitted the court through pure poltroonery;" and great was his mortification as he rode out of the town to hear the people crying in the streets, from the shops and windows, "Adieu, M. le Cardinal; the mass is broken."

The duke and cardinal retired, and, to soothe their disgrace, they attended Mary of Scots to her native land, there to try their arts against Knox and the Protestant nobles of Scotland. As Mary sailed away, she sat on a couch, straining her eyes till the shores faded from her sight, and exclaimed,

> "Farewell, farewell, beloved France!
> I ne'er shall see thee more!"

The facts of history greatly lessen the sympathy for this

watchful and pacific, their motive was merely to gain time. Their main purpose continued the same as before—the destruction of the party of the Reformation in Europe. To put down the Huguenots in France, to encourage the Romanists in England and Scotland, to sow dissension amongst the Protestant princes of Germany, to support the council of Trent now sitting, and, in a word, to concentrate the whole strength of France, Spain, Italy and the Empire against that great moral and religious revolution by which light and truth were struggling to free themselves from the trammels of long-established errors, was the chief object to which they directed their efforts."—*Tytler, History of Scotland*, vi. 197.

powerful queen, by nullifying the romance thrown around her eventful life. Could she have been free from the ruinous craft of her uncles, she might have risen as the star of the North, guiding her native land out of the troubles for which England was greatly responsible. Even in the severe school of French intrigue she had learned the one principle for which such men as Coligny beset the throne—that of allowing a people to choose and exercise the form of religion which they most approved. True, she did not sanction it. Nor was she free to reason upon its justice. With a motley company of French, Italian and Scottish attendants whispering in her ears all about mass-books, Papal bulls and Protestant covenants, her mind was confused by the Babel of tongues: her eyes were dimmed by the mists of policy, as thick as the fogs amid which she landed at Leith. Nor could her wily uncle clear her vision. Romanism had something more to do in reclaiming Scotland than to set up the Papal cross on the shore and the inquisition in the capital. Even the cardinal had too much to face, and left the slow work to other hands. When Mary was met by those earnest, unyielding Scotsmen—the warlike Borderer, the rugged Highlander, the courtier less polite and plastic than she had left in Paris—she saw a force of Protestantism even more resistless than that of Chandieu and Coligny. To flatter or deceive it was impossible;* brave it down she could not; submit she must.

* "If there be not in her a proud mind, a crafty wit, and an indurate heart against God and his truth, my judgment faileth me." Thus said Knox soon after his first conversation with the queen. He gained his point for a time, because (as Randolph expressed his opinion of him) "The voice of that one man is able to put more life in us in one hour than five hundred trumpets blustering in our ears." With all Mr. Froude's aversion to Calvinism, he gives to Knox the credit of doing more for Scotland and England than any other man of his age.

She had a splendid opportunity to illustrate the working of the principles of true liberty. She promised well under Knox and Murray. She was then tolerant, giving free worship to the Protestants, and reserving for herself the little royal chapel with its mass and breviary, its priest and pictures. Some of them were not wise; she grew bewildered and played the fool, through the advice of her uncles. Hers was a sad doom. It might have been averted had she taken as her key-note those words of Knox, in which he condensed the volume of Protestant principles: "Conscience requires knowledge, and of right knowledge I fear you have but little." Here we leave the niece of the Lorraines, whose happiest day was ended when she ceased to be queen of France.

CHAPTER IX.

A CONGRESS AND A COLLOQUY.

(1560–1561.)

THE Guises had not retired before they saw Admiral Coligny brought into prominence at the court. That wary diplomatist, the English Throgmorton, was present to see if Calais might not be recovered and Elizabeth put at the head of the Protestant world. He believed in the freedom of the pen, and thus wrote:

"The house of Guise presently does seem here to bear small rule. The countenance and hope they have is of the King of Spain who, for religion and other respects, it is thought, will help to stay their credit as much as he may.

"The principal managing of affairs doth seem to be chiefly in the hands of the queen-mother, the King of Navarre and the constable [Montmorency now returned]; and as the King of Spain will earnestly travail to suppress religion, so is it most safe for her majesty [Elizabeth] and her best policy to be as diligent to advance it. . . . The true religion is very like to take place in France, and so, consequently, throughout all Europe where Christianity is received.

"I did, of late, address myself to the admiral, who, for his virtue and wisdom, is much esteemed. I do find by him that if the queen's majesty will put an earnest mind and hand to this matter, it will be here well accepted and will work very good effect. We talked of many particulars. He thinks that the general council [of all Protest-

ants] cannot take place, but that the King [of France] must assemble a national council, whereunto, if her majesty would send some learned men, he does not doubt but all shall be well."

Coligny had then in his mind "a national council" upon religious subjects. For this he pleaded with Catherine, and wrote letters far and near. To secure it was the work of months; we shall see the result at Poissy. At the same time there were preparations to be made for the assembly of the States-general, just at hand. He wished to see it a congress of the wisest men to settle the affairs of a groaning nation.

When the news of the king's death was reported through the provinces the deputies crowded to Orleans, for the Romanists wished to make sure of Catherine, and the Protestants must make the most of their opportunity. Coligny must be sustained, and Navarre kept from wavering, leaning too far over and falling by the intoxication of new power. At the opening of the congress we have another long speech from the good chancellor, full of "ideas sage and strong." Peace to all storms in State and Church was his theme. He was not afraid to say that "the death of the late king had excited no new seditions, but had quieted those which had before existed." The debates were not so lively as at Fontainebleau. "The orators cited continually the ancients, without knowing how to imitate them."*

The orator for the clergy was Jean Quintin, who ran into classical illustrations, made himself ridiculous to his brethren and waked up Coligny. He told how one Gairas begged the Emperor Arcadius to allow the Arians the use of a church in Constantinople for their services. The request of the heretic was refused; he deserved it for his impertinence. As he got nothing, he sought revenge, threw

* Lacratelle.

off the mask, showed himself a rebel and miserably perished. All understood that he meant to portray Coligny with his petitions at the former assembly. He said, "If any man digs up buried heresies or revives a condemned sect, and then begs for churches and for liberty in the kingdom" (here all eyes turned upon Coligny), "we ask that he be declared a heretic and punished." The Huguenot nobles demanded a retraction. Coligny requested it from Catherine. The orator made an apology, but he was so overwhelmed by satires, songs and lampoons that he soon after died of chagrin. The admiral did not cease to press the cause of the Huguenots; he aided a deputation of their ministers in addressing the king, and waited his hour for presenting again the Norman petitions, which had previously made such a sensation.

A great idea was coming to light—that of religious toleration. Its advance was slow. Even the chancellor said at Orleans, "It is foolish to look for peace between persons of different creeds. The maxim is, One faith, one law, one king. Therefore let there be a national council to reform abuses. If the pope do not call it, the king will." He opposed all severe measures: "The sword avails little against reason; gentleness will convert more people than violence."

During the winter there were several meetings of the national assembly, when bold men expressed their timely views. "Let there be no force in religious matters," said the abbot of Aubry. "The conscience will allow nothing to command it but reason; therefore the attempt to deny reason to those of the pretended Reformed religion can produce nothing but evil. It would only be driving them into atheism—a result abhorrent to us all. The remedy is in a council; not in the sword and gibbet. What have the nine severe edicts gained? Nothing; the so-called Reform grows by fire."

It was not until August, 1561, that the chancellor took the broad ground of toleration. At Pontoise he said to the estates, "I do not understand those who insist upon banishing the new religion from the kingdom. Our only concern is to know whether the state will gain more by prohibiting than by permitting the Calvinist meetings. We need not ask what their doctrines are, for even if they are bad, is that a reason for proscribing these people?" Another orator took up the theme: "Both parties found their religion on Scripture; then let them not hate and persecute each other. Severe edicts will kindle a fire which no power under heaven can extinguish." A bold measure was proposed to fill the treasury: "If the king wants money, let him do as they have done in England and Germany—take what enriches and corrupts the Church." This proposal called forth such a storm of debate that the Protestants were quite forgotten.

Coligny saw tokens of promise that the government was henceforth to be merciful and tolerant. He hoped that there might be no evil in what Catherine often quoted from the prophet: "Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child!" True Charles IX. was a very unwise child, but his mother seemed to be endowed with a liberal spirit. It was not yet clear to the mind of the honest admiral that she had adopted the rule of Louis XI.: "He who knows not how to feign, knows not how to reign." She understood both these arts. It was for her father that Machiavel had written his "Prince," and she studied the book as if it contained the maxims of her Solomon.

What was Coligny's delight when the chancellor laid down another of his great stepping-stones to liberty! An order was quietly sent, 7th January, 1561, to the parliament of Paris, commanding the release of all prisoners confined on account of their religion. It was advised that the order

be kept secret, "for fear of exciting scandal!" Parliament was angry. The spirit of the slain Du Bourg seemed to rise in their hall. But at the end of the month the order was made public and sent throughout the provinces. This is to be remarked as the first public act of legislation favourable to the Protestants. Another soon followed. Under pain of death it was forbidden all parties to revile each other. One must not call the other Papists; these must not call their neighbours Huguenots. It was forbidden all spies to visit houses to ferret out the secret worshippers of God, or disturb quiet meetings, or to turn informers for a reward against the innocent. Goods, houses and lands were to be restored to those who had suffered by confiscation;* and, lastly, those banished for their faith should be allowed to return to their homes; but, said the parliament of the latter class, "provided they live *externally* as Catholics."

"That means," we hear the chancellor say to Coligny, whose house was set in Reformed order, "that you do not take special pains to show yourselves Protestants. Shut your doors and worship as you choose."

If Coligny might have his psalm-singing and preaching, even at court, why might not others have the like in their homes? The Reformed were not slow to take every inch of privilege. "They discovered themselves frankly about religion," says Castelnau; "they met in houses, where they baptized, celebrated the Lord's Supper and marriages, and offered prayers after the manner of Geneva—very different

* The edict was ordered to be read in the churches. At Provins a friar introduced it thus: "My dear Christian brethren, I am instructed to read an edict ordering the cats and mice to live in peace together; that is to say, that heretics and Catholics should do the same, for such is the king's pleasure. I am sorry for it, and am grieved to see the new reign begin so unpromisingly."—*Quoted in White.*

from those of Augsburg, which many thought better to admit into France, if there was need of either, rather than to allow the entrance of the sect of Calvin. Soon the assemblies became so large that private houses could not contain them. . . . The ministers were mostly ignorant, knowing little beyond the prayers and catechisms printed at Geneva. *The most learned and clever had been banished or executed!*"

"It is incredible," said Calvin, "with what fervent zeal our brethren are urging forward greater progress. Pastors are everywhere asked for from among us. Those who are in quest of them besiege my doors and pay court to me as if I held a *levee.* They vie with one another in pious rivalry, as if there was the utmost peace in Christ's kingdom. We desire to comply with their wishes as far as is possible, but our stock of preachers is exhausted. We have even been obliged to sweep the workshops of the working-classes, to find persons with some tincture of learning and sound doctrine to supply the urgent need."* But there were eloquent tinkers before the days of Bunyan.

Was Coligny deceived by the gentleness of Catherine? Was he again ready to address her as the Esther of the Protestants? "Because she hearkened so freely to the admiral and others who spoke of abuses which crept into the Church, some did not scruple to say that Madame Crussol or the Duchess of Savoy had given her majesty a tincture of the Reformed religion."†

She favoured Jean Montluc, and gave him the pulpit of the palace at Fontainebleau, in which town he had so eloquently defended the Norman petitions less than one year before. Poor Jacobin monk in the cathedral had to preach his Lent sermons to sadly thin audiences. On this proceed-

* Calvin to Bullinger, 24th May, 1561, *et passim.*

† Mémoires de Castelnau; Maimbourg, Histoire du Calvinisme.

ing hear the Jesuit Maimbourg: "It seems to me," he wrote in his History of Calvinism, "that, on the most favourable construction, it may be fearlessly said that all she did on this occasion was but a pretence. She did ill to feign so well as to give ground to believe that she belonged to the new sect. For she not only allowed the ministers to preach in the apartments of the prince (Charles?), where all the world crowded to hear them, whilst a poor Jacobin, who preached the Lent sermons, was deserted, but she went so far as to take part herself, with all her ladies, at the sermons of the Bishop of Valence [Montluc], who preached* openly, in one of the rooms of the château, the new dogmas he had drawn from the heresies of Luther and Calvin. So sudden and so strange a change took place at court that one would have said she was quite a Calvinist. Although it was Lent, meat was sold publicly and spread upon every table. They talked no more of attending mass, and the young king, who was still taken there to keep up appearances, went almost alone (to mass). They scoffed at the authority of the popes, at the worship of the saints and of images, at indulgences, and at the ceremonies of the Church, which they treated as superstitions."†

If the Jesuit was right in saying that Catherine went to the sermons as a feint, he might have said that it was also a feint, on her part, when she went to mass. Her "Italian religion" was no religion at all; it was simply a policy to

* And with his hat on his head, "after the manner of Geneva."

† Why does not Maimbourg tell us of the friar who, on Palm Sunday, took for his text these words from the Vulgate: *Ite in Castellum quod contra vos est* (Go into the village over against you, etc.; Matt. xxi. 2); and, by playing on the word *castellum*, he so applied it as to mean, Go against the house of Chatillon, the enemy of the Church. The name of this house meant *castle*. The hearers understood it, "but that fellow was clapt in prison for his pains," says Laval. This was much to the credit of the Romanists or the chancellor.

please all whom she could deceive, and to divide all parties, who saw through her disguises. "Instead of serving God, she turned God to her service." She listened to Coligny, Montmorency and Navarre when they urged her to wrest from the Guises their offices and honours. The duke was humbled for a time. He and St. André were compelled to refund certain ill-gotten gains, the spoils of their rapacity. She then listened to St. André, who saw a method of breaking down Coligny and his party, and proposed to reconcile the veteran Montmorency and the Duke of Guise. The matter was difficult, even for the court ladies. Something stronger than silk must form the ties; it was found in religion.

"Are these heretics to have all the favours?" said the wife of the constable, who had a genuine Savoy hatred of the Protestants in her veins. "I detest these Coligny brothers—"

"What, what!" muttered the old uncle, "hate my nephews?"

"Their religion, I mean." But her aversion had still another motive, and she skilfully touched other chords. "You have been too partial to your nephews. You have not allowed my brothers of Savoy a share in the honours and offices of state."

"There's no blood of the first Christian baron in their veins," thought Montmorency, still eager to save his nephews from disgraces which he well knew were bitter in the extreme. He hesitated. The new arrangement did not suit his temper. He detested the Guises. He courted Condé. He hoped to make good use of Navarre. He spoke "very lively" to the queen-mother against the whole tribe of Lorraines. Why need she bring them back to the court?

"It is very necessary," replied Catherine. "But you can

still be grand-master; it is your right." The strong will began to bend. "The ancient religion is at stake," said the ladies and St. André, their immoral ally in temptation. The new league was for the sake of religion! "Your nephews are serving the heretics. Your ancient house is thus dishonoured." The old baron's pride was touched. For his religion he must strike hands with the Guises, and ruin the Chatillons.*

Coligny begged his uncle to retain his lofty place as an umpire between all parties, act with De l'Hôpital in securing peace, and not become a partisan with men who had proved themselves the enemies of France. Young Montmorency added his pleas to those of his cousin the admiral. But all was in vain.

On Easter-day a grand mass was celebrated. Whispers of a strange reconciliation had drawn many to the church. The gray-headed Montmorency knelt at the altar. The fiery Duke of Guise came and knelt at his side. They took the wafer together. No doubt the Marshal St. André completed the trio. In their hearts they pledged a faith to each other, and to Romanism, which was yet to prove almost the doom of Protestantism in France. They went from the altar to a feast provided by the constable. To this part of the loving engagement full justice was done by St. André, whom Brantome calls "a true Lucullus," and the Protestant Laval describes as "a man altogether surrendered to gluttony and its consequent vices." This union was to strengthen until it would receive the name of *The Triumvirate.* It was to be the head of the Romish party in France. Behind it was the Cardinal of Lorraine, with the mass of the clergy. Above it was the pope and Philip of Spain. Beneath it were the people, especially of the north and the west. Before it the King of Navarre will bow and

* D'Auvigny, Vie de Montmorency; Perau, Vie de Coligny.

betray every trust committed to him by the Protestants. Out of it are to grow tyranny over the State and persecutions upon the true Church.

They began their work. Coligny saw his dignified uncle display the most childish spirit of rage. The proud descendant of "the first Christian baron" was one day persuaded to attend the "queen's preachings" in the palace, and listen to the eloquent bishop of Valence, who "preached in a short cloak and a cap, after the fashion of the ministers." Hearing and seeing what he hated, he burst forth into an ungovernable fury, and disturbed the preacher by his insolence. Indeed, the good bishop's life was quite in danger. At another time he was crossing the hall, when he found a large assembly attent upon the like discourses. In a tempest of wrath he cried out, "Fling that fellow out of the window!" The bishop narrowly escaped.*

The nephews of Montmorency were giving him trouble. In his new zeal he quite forgot the former gentleness toward them, and yet he dare not strike. Besides the preaching supported by the two younger brothers, Cardinal Odet was filling Beauvais with the new doctrines. As he was a bishop, why should he not follow the good old gospel way, and tell the people how to be happiest on earth and how to get to heaven at last? On an Easter-day he went into his cathedral and surprised the people by having no mass. Had he forgotten it? He surprised some of them still more by inviting the faithful to his house, and there celebrating the Lord's Supper "after the fashion of Geneva." This was not to be endured by the Romanists. They rose, went howling for vengeance around his walls, and created such a disturbance that there was soon no lack of a crowd. Some young wool-carders having a holiday, and roaming through streets, thought to make the best of their chance, and began

* D'Artigny, Vie de Montmorenci.

to break into the houses and get the spoils. An elder of the church, and a teacher of the children was seized torn from his home, beaten and murdered. His body was carried to the burning-place, tied to the stake, and an officer applied the fire to the fagots amid the shouts of the mob. Some ran to the bishop's palace, calling for him to show himself. They saw him come to the window. There he stood in his cardinal's hat and robes, and they judged him by the dress he wore; so they were content, and each left for his own home. Odet, being a cardinal, was not in danger of the charge of having caused a riot. The rioters, being "good Catholics," were quite safe from prosecution. Yet the affair was reported to his uncle as a revolt. Young Marshal Montmorency was sent to quell the disturbance. Very likely he had a special care to have a private word with his cousin, with whose opinions he was quite in sympathy. Two men were punished.*

"In twenty cities, or thereabouts, the godly have been massacred by the infuriated mob. Respecting these butcheries no investigation has been instituted, except at Beauvais. At Paris, when the populace attacked the house of a courageous nobleman, and he, by the aid of his friends, repelled the furious assault, twelve persons were killed and forty wounded. A decree was immediately passed that he should compear, and if he did not constitute himself prisoner before the expiration of three market-days, he should be condemned by default. Now, certainly, if ever, it is the time to implore God that he would be mindful of his unfortunate flock." Thus wrote Calvin, who had constantly reports from all France. He heard of the rapid growth of churches in Provence—sixty of them in a single year, despite the fury shown against them. He wrote to some of them: "We are well aware that it is a plausible opinion

* Laval, Hist. Ref.

that it is lawful for us to avenge ourselves on a mutinous populace, as this is not resisting the order of justice; nay, that the laws themselves arm us against robbers. But, whatever sophistries be thus urged, our whole duty consists in practicing the lesson taught by our sovereign Master, to possess our souls in patience. In truth it is best and safest to hide under his shadow when exposed to such storms. Now it is by this resisting evil by force of arms that we prevent him from coming to our relief.* . . . We live in times when we should labour on the one hand and suffer on the other. Better a hundredfold die than flinch."

Coligny put himself in direct correspondence with Geneva, a great offence to the Triumvirate. He asked for a preacher. We know not who was first sent. Calvin says: "The admiral is the only one on whose fidelity we can count. A colleague of ours is stirring up his zeal. This colleague I sent to him, without consulting anybody, lest any part of the odium should fall on our senate. He preaches publicly to crowded audiences not far from the palace. All our adversaries keep bawling that such audacity should not be tolerated. The queen entreats him, coaxingly, to desist. But rather than flinch he will brave everything." And yet Coligny had to give way somewhat, if Chautounay reported the truth to his Spanish master, Philip. He referred to the influence of the admiral, whose chaplain preached to more than three hundred persons, but still later wrote: "The day after Easter Sunday the public preachings in the great court [open space] of Fontainebleau, before the lodgings of Admiral Coligny, in the presence of M. de Condé, have been forbidden." Chautounay had advised that the heretics should be punished, but Catherine replied, "It is not possible; see the great number of them. It would ruin everything, and excite a civil war." D'Aubigné says,

* Compare the various letters of Calvin during the year 1561.

that she used "the language of Canaan" when conversing with Protestant ministers. One account is, that she promised "to have her son, the king, instructed in their religion."*

Coligny wants yet another minister, who may be a chaplain in his own house. Calvin sends him John Raymond Merlin,† a young Dauphinese of excellent abilities, and afterward writes to the admiral: "Be not weary in the good work. It is worth a hundred lives, if we had them. I know the difficulties which might arrest you or cause you to turn bridle. You know them still better, and therefore put your stay on God. Look higher than the world; have your anchor in heaven. I shrewdly suspect that the devil is brewing some mischief underground to cause fresh disorders. Yet God may do his work in some extraordinary fashion. I do not approve of the ardour of some who are in too great haste, but as I cannot restrain them, I shut my eyes and leave all to God. . . . One word in your private ear, about what I wrote you." [He refers to the proposed alliance between France and the Swiss cantons, of which he had already written to the admiral, saying, "I am anxious to have some measure adopted in favour of this poor city, that it may not be exposed to pillage" by the Duke of Savoy.] "If you see the matter followed up, take care that we are not forgotten. You have higher interests in this town. By seeking its good you serve your king. It may seem a small matter, yet what is small is not always to be despised." This is proof of Coligny's influence at the court.

* Discours Merveilleux de Cath. de Medici (Henry Etienne?). Mem. de Condé.—*Von Raumer, Orig. Doc.*

† Also named M. de Monroy. "Master Jehan Merlin was sent to the house of the admiral at court, who had written to have a person in such a place."—*Registres de la Companie, A. D.* 1561, quoted in Bonnet's notes to Calvin's Letters. For the above correspondence see Letters to the Admiral, 28th January–May, 1561.

We need not wonder if, in the excess of their joy over the edict of January, the Protestants occasionally took too large a liberty. Yet at this period we find very few instances of their going into the Romish churches, singing psalms, disturbing the priests, overturning the mass-tables, pulling down images, hurling out one worship and bringing in another. The chief events of this sort belong to a later day, when their freedom was taken from them and they were exasperated by oppression. They simply came forth from their retreats, and in open day, on public squares, within large halls, in the parks of the nobles, on the grounds around their mansions, began to assemble in crowds to hear the divine word and render praise to God. It was not the meeting itself, but the design of it and the charm it had for the people that gave offence.

Such growing boldness was a theme for the Triumvirate.* They must apply the check. They worked through parliament the *edict of July*, after twenty days of argument, and by a majority of only three votes. It partly reversed the laws secured by the chancellor and Coligny. Houses might now be searched, meetings therein broken up, larger assemblies suppressed and heretics punished according to a rule as old as Cain; but the punishment must not be severer than exile. The Duke of Guise declared, after the vote proved a bare victory, "To maintain this edict my sword shall never be sheathed."

Even this fulmination did not provoke rebellion among the Reformed. De Crussol reported that he found those at Montpelier living in "great obedience and reverence." The Papal legate St. Croix praised them with emphasis. He wrote to Rome: "In Gascony and other places I saw

* "The Cardinal of Lorraine demanded from the parliament of Paris the revocation of the edict of January."—*Froude Hist. of England,* viii. 390. This is valiantly denied by Maimbourg.

no mutilated images, no broken crosses, no deserted churches, as I had been told I should." If the haughty Gascons were so quiet, we may think as well of the Protestants in other parts. Still the Triumvirs hurled their bolts wherever they dared to strike.

And yet all was not undone. The great onward movement was not checked. The ice was melting, and who could stop the torrent of freer thought? God had touched men's hearts, and who could stay his hand? France was to have her religious council—not a Trent affair, at which Protestants dare not appear, not a Westminster Assembly, to which Romanists were not invited—but a free colloquy for all who chose to attend. Calvinist and Jesuit, Lutheran and Sorbonnist, monk and missionary, prelate and pastor, all might come and take their part. It was not, it could not have been a purely Protestant affair. The times forbade it. A very moderate class of men secured the passage of this clause in the edict of July: "The prelates of the kingdom being assembled, safe-conducts shall be sent to the ministers of the religion called the *New*, in order that they may in security appear and be heard in their confession of faith; that the endeavour may be made to convince them by the word of God, as it has been explained by the doctors of the first five centuries after Christ."

Some members objected to the clause, but the Cardinal of Lorraine "assured them that he would vanquish the said ministers by argument, and require no other arms."

Hence the colloquy of Poissy. It certainly did not originate in a challenge by the Cardinal of Lorraine to the Protestants. Nor did "Theodore Beza snatch eagerly at the gage," thus making the challenge a fact. Nor is it a fair statement that "had the Reformers in France made a moderate use of the opportunity which the death of Francis created for them, they might have won the confi-

dence of the great national party." The "moderate use" was evidently made by them in the steps to this conference.

It is easy to deride the doctrines which conscientious men draw from Scripture, and to represent true zeal as fanaticism. It was so in the apostolic days. But there are times when the missionary needs the earnest courage of the warrior. It was so in the days when Peter and his brethren replied to the Sanhedrim, "We ought to obey God rather than men." There are times when the Lord "sends a fire on the earth," and when men whom he approves are charged with too great earnestness, and even with a revolutionary spirit. It was so when the cry was raised by certain people who took needless alarm at the advance of the apostles, and said, "These, who have turned the world upside down, are come hither also." There are times when wise men need to be cautious of their rebukes upon a sound faith and a martyr's zeal. It was so when Gamaliel gave the warning, "Lest haply ye be found even to fight against God;" and when such men as De l'Hôpital thought it just to give the Calvinists a little space. He knew that a few abuses did not prove a new creed to be "exclusive," nor a new zeal to be productive of anarchy.

There was not in the Reformers of France all the tolerance which a modern historian would be pleased to find. It was nowhere found in that age as it now exists. Yet these French ministers did not claim to have exclusive possession of the truth, nor come to Poissy to force "Calvinism" upon France. The facts prove a compromising spirit. There was a spirit of resistance abroad—occasionally one of violence—but these ministers had not kindled the flame. The facts show that it was not fanned by the cooling breezes from snow-girt Geneva; that Calvin busily denounced all violent acts, and more especially the taking up of the

sword;* that Coligny and the religious Huguenots had not yet taken it; that the political malcontents of both religions first girded it at their sides; that Condé was mainly responsible for such attacks as that upon Lyons; and that it was anything but a Calvinistic propagandism which led to the league of the Triumvirate. It was rather the propagandism of Rome. It was crafty policy, selfishness, ambition to rule. The pressure which provoked was that of Rome. It drove the Protestants, in some cases, to an extreme. Human tempers will not always bear fiery opposition; strike the cap on the musket and the powder flashes, the ball flies, and there may be a death in the crowd which sought to test the aimless weapon. If "the Huguenot congregations attended sermons with steel cuirass and hand on sword-hilt," it was no more than their enemies were doing. Even priests had worn arms in churches at Geneva; doubtless also in France. Amid the Indian wars in America gentle ministers laid their pistols on the pulpit and then uttered the gospel of peace. Yet they were not intolerant, nor urging a crusade for the extermination of their tawny foes.

The colloquy of Poissy was not a Calvinistic device. It was not called in the special interest of Calvinism. It was not the work of Beza. It was the scheme of such men as De l'Hôpital, the Bishop of Valence and Admiral Coligny. "The queen-mother and the chancellor greatly cherished the project," says a writer, by no means a Protestant; "she

* "Certain outbreaks displease us, which it is extremely difficult to moderate. In many towns, as no private building would hold the multitude, they have usurped the temples. And though they are everywhere preaching all over Guienne, without any public disturbance, we should have preferred that they follow a line of conduct more expedient. Nor are they dismayed by those atrocious edicts in which the king commanded all the edifices in which a meeting is held to be razed to the ground, and those who attend to be punished as rebels."—*Calvin's Letters*, dxciii. 24th May, 1561.

in the hope of increasing the disputes, and he in the hope of allaying them." *

And yet Calvin was invited; so too was the Cardinal of Lorraine. To this the Genevan Reformer doubtless refers when he says: "The queen-mother did not hesitate to say that all remedies would be useless unless I were sent for." † Chandieu wrote to him saying: "It will be perilous for you to come, so great is the rage of the enemies of the gospel. Your very name will be used to excite trouble in the provinces if it be known that you are at Poissy." The Genevan senate refused to let him go.‡ Beza was also urged to come. "Again and again we beg you to send him as soon as possible," wrote Antony of Navarre to the senators. "All due honour, welcome and good treatment will be shown him, such as his probity, learning and talents require. In this you will do the king, the queen-mother and myself a very special favour."

What folly for the Romish writers § to portray a young man of the world, witty, rich, tempted, erring, the author of a volume of light poetry, a husband by a marriage kept secret for his uncle's sake, and then write beneath the picture, This is Theodore Beza! True, he was such a young man while a Romanist enjoying some rich benefices, made over to him by an uncle, whom he dared not displease. But he was turned from darkness to light. A serious illness brought to his conscience the teachings of Melchior Wolmar at Orleans, where they read the Greek Testament to-

* Lacratelle, Guerres de Religion. The Jesuit Maimbourg says: "It was a scheme concerted between the queen, the admiral and the chancellor." Her design being, "to draw to her side the admiral and his party, against the chiefs of the Catholic cause."

† Calvin to Bullinger, 24th May, 1561.

‡ Spon, Histoire de Genéve; Senebier; Gaberel.

§ Such as Maimbourg and Audin.

gether. To his teacher he wrote: "As soon as I had strength to raise myself, I broke all my chains, packed up my travelling effects, and left my country, my kindred and my friends to follow Christ. I went into voluntary exile, and retired to Geneva with my wife." He was then over twenty-nine years old. On his journey he may have visited his native town of Vezelay, where his ancestors held a noble rank.

He had left all for his new Master. In his poverty he resolved to be a printer, joining with him Jean Crispin, the author of the "History of the Martyrs." Humble enough to enter the shop, he had too much merit to remain in it. He studied theology, became a professor and a preacher. He drew the attention of Calvin, and their friendship became ardent and lasting till death. Invited by the King of Navarre to Nerac,* he preached throughout his little realm, and sought to educate him and the Prince of Condé in the peace of the Gospel. They were then planning war, and soon were cited to court. He went with them on their way to Orleans as far as it was safe, and, turning aside, escaped by nightly journeys to Geneva.

He was pushing forward the new academy at Geneva when he was urged to appear as the champion of the Protestants at Poissy. But the senate was not willing to let him go, unless his safety was ensured. Calvin tells us how the affair was managed: "We could not obtain a safe-conduct, as they call it, because the queen-mother was unwilling to expose herself to so much unpopularity with the pope. The King of Navarre, however, pledged his faith in a letter to our council. Privately also the king himself [Navarre], his brother the Prince of Condé, and the ad-

* "The 20th July our brother M. de Beza was sent into Gascony to the King of Navarre, in order to instruct him in the word of God."—*Register of Geneva*, 1560; *Baum, Theodor Beza.*

miral earnestly urged Beza not to delay any longer, because he would need to make all possible despatch, if he wished to arrive at the proper moment. They also entreated me rather to push him forward than to retard him." Calvin secretly rode out with him into the country, and afterward wrote: "Beza has set out without a safe-conduct, and from the village to which I had retired he was escorted by my brother to the nearest relay of the couriers, that he might pass through less noticed by means of post-horses."*

He arrived at Saint Germain on the twenty-third of August, 1561, and was received with marks of high esteem. Coligny, doubtless, looked for the first time upon the man whose stately bearing was equal to that of any of the nobles, whose elegance of manners was a passport to the court, whose learning was greater than that of any of the Huguenots present, and whose skill in argument would not suffer in a contest with the acute Cardinal of Lorraine. The next morning he preached in the saloon of the Prince of Condé before a large and distinguished audience, "who heard him without any tumult or scandal." After nightfall he was invited to the apartments of the King of Navarre. No one greeted him with more delight than the heroic Queen Jeanne, who must have wished for a friendly talk with him about the good John Calvin, whose letters were ever welcome to her. But Beza was not brought there to exchange words of friendship; it was that he might be measured and his powers gauged by his future antagonist. Queen Catherine gave him welcome, and inquired concerning Calvin's age and habits of life. This was not an agreeable subject to the Cardinal of Lorraine, who was not long in saying, "I trust that you will remember that you are a Frenchman, and that the gifts bestowed upon you by the pleasure of God belong to your country. You

* Calvin's Letters, dciii., dciv.

have troubled the realm in your absence; now let your presence bring peace to France."

"You may be assured, sir," replied Beza, "that, next to the service of my God, that of my king and my country are most dear to me. I have never been important enough to trouble so great a realm as France, and I am too insignificant to restore peace to her people. But I have ever sought to render her good offices; in proof of this I refer you to my past writings."

"Have you ever written anything in French?" asked the queen-mother; and he did not intend to let slip an arrow by replying, "I may name my part of the version of the Psalms." It could not fail to remind her how Marot's part of the version had once been sung in the palace with such enthusiasm. He also referred to other writings.

"There lies at this moment, on my table at Poissy," said the cardinal, "a Latin tract on the Lord's Supper, attributed to you, in which you say we must not look for Christ bodily in the elements."

"The body of our Lord is in heaven," was the substance of the reply; "but by the bread and wine Christ is truly administered to those who receive him in faith." A long and candid discussion followed. The cardinal avowed that he did not press transubstantiation. It is said that he had some hope of finding Beza open to the temptations of avarice or ambition; and if such a man were converted or silenced, it would be a victory to the cardinal and to the Papal Church. At length he said, with a winning air, "I am glad to see and hear you. I call upon you in God's name to confer with me, so that we may understand each other. You will not find me so black as I have been painted." He bowed to depart.

Madame Crussol took him by the hand, saying, in her free manner, "You have shown yourself a good man this

evening, but what will you be to-morrow?" Then turning to the company, she said, "It would be better to bring pen and paper and have the cardinal sign his admission. To-morrow he may say just the contrary." And, as we are told, "she guessed rightly, for the next morning it was reported that the cardinal had silenced Beza in argument." The queen corrected the story.

"To-day I preached at the admiral's, who kept me to dinner," wrote Beza to Calvin on the twenty-fifth of August. "After dinner dropped in the Cardinal de Chatillon and M. de Montmorency [the marshal?], who I see stands well affected to us, as, in truth, matters are now set in motion with a wonderful impulse." In another of his letters he tells us that the admiral had a parrot which kept screaming, "*Vie, vie! la messe est abolie*—Life, life! the mass is abolished. Should we speak of God everywhere? Let us speak of God everywhere." It is not possible for us to render the jingle of the rhyming words, but the sentiment is worthy of notice as a proof of what Coligny would teach even his bird, and have it boldly declare to others. The parrot was not likely to conceal his opinions, whatever the company.

On the ninth of September the court met in the refectory of a convent at Poissy, near the palace of St. Germain. It was at once seen that the Protestant deputies were to be treated as inferiors and suppliants. They were not invited to a *council*, for under that name only Romish prelates must be summoned. Great care had been taken to call it a *colloquy*, but there was to be no familiar conversation. One would have supposed, from the grand display of purple robes, red hats, gold lace, feathers and jewels, that the court, cardinals and clergy were met in the convent to receive a dinner from the nuns, and that the Protestants were to be kept out until the second table. But these earnest

Christian men cared little for the insult of not being admitted on the footing of equality. The child-king took his place on a throne and recited the opening address. The Chancellor de l'Hôpital made so excellent a speech that it gave offence to those who needed advice. "You are assembled," said he, "to proceed to the reformation of manners and doctrine. . . . The best way to arrive at an understanding is to proceed with humility, laying aside subtle and curious disputes. There is no occasion for many books, but to fully understand the word of God and to conform to it. Do not esteem them to be enemies who are said to be of the *new religion*, who are Christians and baptized like yourselves, and do not condemn them through prejudice. Receive them as a father receives his children."

"I call for a copy of the chancellor's speech," said Cardinal de Tournon, who was not more out of temper than his brethren. "A reformation in doctrine! The word of God their standard! The Huguenots fellow-Christians! These are the absurd notions of a man who ought to have the great seal taken from him."

"My remarks were made, as usual, without having been written," mildly replied the chancellor, who remembered Du Bourg, and foresaw the censures which must fall upon himself if he took the trouble to gratify a cardinal in his keen search for heresy. A wild scene followed. The colloquy bade fair to become a quarrel, without the fault of the Protestants, who were not yet admitted.

At length order was restored, and a signal given for the captain of the guards to usher in the Reformed deputies.*

* Beza and twelve French preachers: Nicolas de Gallars, Augustin Marlorat, Francis de St. Pol, Jean Malot, Francis de Morel (Collonges), Nicolas Thobie, Claude de Boissiere, Jean Bouquin, Joseph Viret, Jean de la Tour (chaplain to Jeanne of Navarre), Jean Merlin (Coligny's preacher), and Jean de l'Espine (a converted Dominican

Those men, at that hour, were doing the bravest thing in Christendom. At their side was a splendid escort of two-and-twenty of the first gentlemen in the realm. The thirteen ministers wore their simple black gowns and Genevan bands—a sober costume in strange contrast to the gorgeous robes of the prelates. But their step was that of confident veterans, for if they had before them the fortified citadel of Romanism, they knew that God was above them, and behind them a great part of the French nation. They offered to enter within the railings and take seats beside the Roman Catholic doctors. But they were stopped—the mark of inequality must be put upon them. They must sit in a lower place, not as equals in a *colloquy*, but as persons accused at the bar. Very well; they sought not "the highest seats."

What next? Beza addressed the king in words like these: "I entreat your majesty not to take it amiss if I first have recourse to the Father of lights for assistance in this important moment of my life. The enterprise to which we are called is beyond our strength." Then the noble band solemnly knelt, uncovered their heads, and Beza lifted his voice in prayer. He confessed the national sins and the sins of God's own people. He touchingly recounted the past afflictions of his brethren in the faith and their perils at the present hour. He enlarged upon the hopes which God gave them in their young king and his councillors. He prayed that he and his brethren might have the candour to receive all truth and constancy to defend it to the last, and that their discussions might bring repose to their

friar). Peter Martyr came afterward from Geneva. A charge brought against Elizabeth of England was: "Money was given to Cassiodorus to enable him to be present at the conference of Poissy." Coligny was present as one of the prominent laymen. Beza relates that his escort from the palace to the convent numbered a hundred horsemen.

afflicted country. His soft, earnest voice, his calm manner and his spirit of love powerfully affected the Romish dignitaries, who seem to have been so anxious to impress their little human king that they quite forgot the great King of heaven and earth. These men so gained the admiration of the spectators that it was wondered whether they were the impious and detested heretics, bitterly denounced the evening before as little less than monsters. The king was never so awed,

> For his heart and the hearts of his people were moved
> As the trees of the wood are moved by the wind."*

Beza rose with his brethren and addressed the king and prelates. He would not, he said, attack what was eternal—the true Church of the Lord. He was ready to correct himself, and his brethren, if any error should be found in them. He would rather defend his own cause than assail his adversaries. "And would to God," he warmly cried, "that, without going any farther, instead of opposing each other, we might all sing a canticle with one voice, and hold out hands to one another!" Enlarging upon the doctrines of the Reformers and their loyalty to their king and their Divine Lord, he prepared the way for an act of great moral sublimity. Kneeling again with his brethren, he presented to Charles IX. the Confession of Faith adopted by the French churches. It was the substance of all that he had declared in his speech.

A deep silence had prevailed while Beza was gently and eloquently defending his doctrines, until he said, "If any one ask us if we hold Jesus Christ to be absent from the holy supper, we answer, No. But if we refer to the distance between places, as we must do when the question of his corporeal presence and humanity is considered, we say

* Isaiah vii. 2.

that his body is as far removed from the bread and wine as the highest heaven is distant from the earth."

At these words deep murmurs broke out in the ranks of the prelates.* "He has blasphemed!" exclaimed some, in their indignation. Others rose to leave the hall. "I beg the king to silence him, or permit him to retire," said Cardinal Tournon, "or dissolve the assembly."

"Order! order!" said the king. "The speaker will explain himself."

"We are on earth," continued Beza, cooled by the very breezes of passion; "the body of Christ is in heaven; yet, if any one should thence conclude that we assert Jesus Christ to be absent from the holy supper, we maintain his conclusion to be false. We affirm that, spiritually and by faith, we are partakers of Christ's body and blood, even as certainly as we behold the sacrament with our eyes, touch it with our hands, place it within our lips and feed on its substance." Thus he held that the presence of Christ is *real*, but yet not bodily; it is spiritual. We may not appreciate the importance of these questions in that age.

After some displays of rage on the part of certain cardinals, the session was adjourned for five days. The Romish doctors met in secret to collect their wisdom. "Would to God," exclaimed the Cardinal of Lorraine, "he had been dumb, or we deaf!" In their perplexity they selected one of their number to answer Beza.

The Cardinal of Lorraine brought forward again his favourite trap. It was agreed to draw up a confession of faith. All the papal party would sign it; then it should be presented to the Protestant deputies for their signatures.

* "I was upon the point of commanding him to be silent," wrote Queen Catherine afterward; "but, considering that it is their custom to take advantage of everything for the confirmation of their doctrine and lest an interruption might be so turned, I suffered him to proceed."

If they should refuse—a certain event—a blasting anathema was to be uttered against them, and the discussion closed. "Compel them to sign it or exterminate them, for France is a country that has never put up with heresy." Such was the demand of the extreme Romanists, but Catherine charged them with a perverse desire to increase the troubles in the land. It was thus that the Roman clergy pretended to confer with the Protestant ministers. In their view the colloquy was a court, and the Reformed pastors were on trial at their bar. We are happy to find that there were some moderate Romanists who opposed this outrageous measure of the majority.

The Admiral Coligny was ready to baffle such strategy. He had power with the king, his mother and the chancellor. We may surmise that it is his hand which we see presenting a complaint to the king, declaring that, "if the bishops are to be our judges, and condemn us unheard, it will be contrary to every law, human and divine. We are here at the king's invitation, to promote peace, to confer with our opponents and to quell disturbances. If the end is not gained, ours will not be the fault." The chancellor promised them justice, and the cardinal's old trap was overturned without a victim.

Other scenes, other clashes and other futile schemes of agreement followed in the hall of the convent at Poissy. We may turn from the debates and follow Beza to a wedding on the twentieth of September. Queen Jeanne of Navarre was responsible for this diversion. She resolved to have her cousin Rohan's wedding so celebrated as to let her light shine upon the path of the Huguenots. Admiral Coligny, Andelot, Odet, the Prince of Condé and King Antony were present at Argenteuil, where the bridal party assembled. At the hour there appeared before Beza the young lord Jean de Rohan and the lady Diana de Cany,

who were united until the massacre of St. Bartholomew should consign him to a place among the Protestant martyrs. The father of the bride was so fierce a Romanist that he persecuted his wife, who was a firm Protestant, and to whom Calvin wrote several letters of consolation. Beza was able to bring her good tidings from Geneva. This affair, performed at the very gates of Paris, greatly encouraged the Reformed ministers, and weddings "after the fashion of Geneva" came into vogue. But there were two results of historic importance. One was the wrath of the legate of the pope,* just arrived to say that the "holy father" was extremely provoked at the holding of such a colloquy as that of Poissy. The other was the trembling which began to seize upon the King of Navarre. He was falling into the snares of the Triumvirate. The papal legate employed his wiles. Poor time-serving Antony! To no man was he more indebted for his very life and his high office than to Admiral Coligny, and yet to no man was he about to be more false.

We return to Poissy on the twenty-fourth. The Cardinal of Lorraine is again at his work of trapping. He is baiting the snare with the Confession of Augsburg. He will play Lutheran in order to destroy the Calvinists. He has sent to Metz and brought certain Augsburg men, hoping to set the two strong Protestant parties against each other. This has failed. Now he draws a paper from his pocket, he reads some articles of the Lutheran Confession, and asks the Reformed ministers if they will sign them. They request time to reflect.

* Queen Catherine had taken pains to prevent the pope from having an early knowledge of the colloquy. She sent couriers in time, to avoid blame, but she also ordered her agents along the route to waylay them, destroy the letters, and thus avoid having a legate present on the occasion. But she had written him a letter (Aug. 4) which astonished him, for she spoke well of "the heretics."

They know Calvin's opinion, often expressed, and yet so anxious is he that on this very day he is writing to Coligny: "Especially I entreat you to hold firm, and not allow the Confession of Augsburg to be brought into the question, which would only be a torch to light the fire of discord."

Beza finds that the cardinal has garbled his extracts, but still they are not far from the truth, on the Lord's supper. Two days later he declares to him, "If we are asked to sign this document as one party, it is but reasonable that you also should sign it in the name of your party."

"We are not equal, and are far from being so," replied the cardinal, who shrank from taking the very medicine which he prescribed for the Protestants. "For my part, I am not called upon to sign on the word of any master. I subscribe neither to the authors of this confession nor to you."

"Since you will not sign it yourselves, it is not just to call upon us for our names." Then came two fresh champions into the list. One was Peter Martyr, the celebrated Italian, who had taken refuge in Geneva. Calvin had urged him to go to Poissy, saying, in answer to his objections, "If it be not yet God's pleasure to open a door, it is our duty to creep through the windows, rather than allow an opportunity to escape of bringing about a happy arrangement. I learn that the queen-mother is very desirous of hearing you." Queen Catherine heard him with delight, for he spoke in her native language. We cannot tell how far he might have drawn her toward his opinions, had not the Cardinal of Lorraine cried out, "Let us have nothing to do with anybody who does not speak French!" It would all have been well enough had he spoken Romish. The Protestants were on the eve of a great victory. They almost gained from the Papists the five following admissions: that the Holy Scripture was of higher authority than the Church—that the true voice of the Church was to be

heard from the first five centuries—that the doctrine of transubstantiation was not essential to the faith—that some sects outside of the Roman pale were to be recognized as Christians, having a lawful ministry and proper sacraments—and that the French Protestants might have toleration in the kingdom. Coligny thought these admissions would make Poissy glorious for liberty. The Chancellor de l'Hôpital imagined they would prove to be some of his great stepping-stones to freedom of conscience and worship.

But another fresh champion entered the field as the reserve corps of the pope. (Did he speak French?) He was Jacques Lainez, the Spanish general of the Jesuits, a company of sappers and miners just seeking admission into France. If he could do good service at Poissy, he would open the way for his spiritual troops. He began on this wise: "In all my constant reading I have learned that it is dangerous to treat with heretics or even listen to them." (A scholar! he will set us right, thought the perplexed bishops.) "I beg the queen to understand that neither she nor any human prince has a right to treat in matters of the faith. Every man to his trade. She is but a woman! This is the business of the priests." (Good doctrine! our king and queen had no right to call this conference, and have no power to harmonize these parties, whispered the cardinals.) "It is the business of the queen to suppress heresy in the name of the pope, for these people are wolves and foxes and serpents." The Jesuit thus went on for an hour, uttering "nothing but a heap of abuse," pleading "with many sighs and tears," and often provoking laughter, but still kindling fierce wrath in the minds of the Papists. He finally convinced them that it was a mortal sin to admit Protestants to a discussion, that the pope did not look upon the conference with the least allowance, and that the sessions must be broken up at once. Even Beza could not

resist the fury with which he spoke. He carried the day. The colloquy ended.

The next day the Prince of Condé said to Lainez, "Do you know that the queen is very much incensed against you and that she shed tears?"

"I know Catherine de Medici of old," he replied, smiling and delighted. "She is a great actress; but, prince, fear nothing; she won't deceive *me!*" The Jesuit knew her policy; the prince still imagined that she had principles.

Catherine saw that she must hold the powerful party of the Huguenots. Such men as Coligny entreated her to make one more effort for toleration. They had noted her tears. She invited a little party to meet in her private apartments at St. Germain. Five of them were moderate Romanists, such as Jean Montluc and Despence. Five of them were Protestants, among whom were Beza, Peter Martyr and Marlorat. They all sought peace and toleration. They had almost won the day at Poissy. They wrote, struck out, interlined, copied and recopied, until at last they hit upon certain vague phrases which every one could interpret as he chose. The main part of the article agreed upon thus reads: "We confess that Jesus Christ in his holy supper truly presents, gives and exhibits to us the substance of his body and blood by the operation of his Holy Spirit; and that we receive and eat sacramentally, spiritually and through faith that very body which died for us."

"My joy is unbounded," said the queen to Beza, for she, probably, gave the words no sort of interpretation. Others at court shared in her delight, without her treachery.

"It is just what I have always believed," said the Cardinal of Lorraine, on reading a copy of the paper. "I trust it will satisfy the Poissy divines." The historian remarks, "That he uttered these words is quite certain; per-

haps he thought that he spoke truth, for such kind of people never have leisure to think whether they believe or not, nor, indeed, to think at all on what they think they believe." Yet Lorraine was more likely to be crafty than thoughtless.

"It is captious and heretical," said the Sorbonnists; "let us draw up a confession, and if the Huguenots refuse to sign it, let them be driven out of the kingdom." They drew up their formula, but how far they drove the Protestants remains to be seen.

The Reformed ministers returned to their charges, except Beza, who was invited by the queen to remain in France. She allowed him to preach publicly in the open court of the palace of St. Germain, and, large as it was, it could scarcely furnish room for the assembled crowds. This was the signal for a general rallying of the Huguenots. The late colloquy "increased the audacity of the Reformed, and the people saw the number of their churches multiplied."

Beza wrote to Calvin: "By the grace of God, we have begun to found a church here (at Saint Germain); and, God aiding us, we shall celebrate the sacrament of the Lord's supper next Sabbath. . . . The Queen of Navarre ceased not to ask for a minister, and moreover declares that she will not suffer me to quit her court." Geneva urged Beza to come back, for his academy needed him; but Coligny and others argued that, as he was a Frenchman, France needed him, and prevailed on the senate to lengthen his furlough.

Even the children of the royal family had caught the spirit of the times. Margaret, who became the wife of Henry IV. at the time of the St. Bartholomew massacre, gives us an insight into the household of her mother Catherine. She says: "The whole court was infected with heresy, about the time of the conference of Poissy. It was hard

for me to resist and keep myself from a change of religion at that time. Many ladies and lords belonging to court strove to convert me to the wretched Huguenotism.* The Duke of Anjou, since King Henry III., then a mere child, had been persuaded to change his religion,† and he often snatched my *Hours* [or breviary] out of my hand and flung it into the fire, giving me instead the psalms and prayers of the Huguenots, and insisting that I should use them. I gave them to Madame Curton, my governess, whom God caused to keep me steadfast. She took me to that good man, Cardinal Tournon, and he fortified me, giving me books and chaplets of beads in place of those which Anjou burned. My brother and his friends said that if I would go and hear the sermons I should be cured of my bigotry. He threatened me, and said that my mother would have me whipped. But he said this of his own head, for she did not then know of the errors he had embraced. When she found it out, she took him to task, severely reprimanded his governors, had him chastised, and so instructed him in the holy and ancient religion of his forefathers that he never swerved from it afterward. I was then seven or eight years of age, and to his threats I said, 'Get me whipped if you can; I will suffer beating and even death rather than be damned.' I could furnish you with other proofs of the early ripeness of my judgment and my courage, but enough."‡

A worthier convert was found in the celebrated philosopher Peter Ramus.§ He was the son of a poor coal-dealer,

* La malheureuse Huguenoterie.

† The Duke of Bouillon asserts that the next brother, Alençon, "favoured the Religion." In either case it was a mere child's inclination.

‡ Mémoires de Margaret de Valois.

§ "Le plus grand philosophe de son siècle."—*Puaux.* He has been called the forerunner of Bacon and Descartes.

and was born near Noyon, about the time of Calvin's birth. These two Picardins might have sharply discussed the doctrine of predestination in their day of vigour. The lad Peter forsook the coal-pits, went to school, grew wiser than his teacher, set out on foot for Paris, almost starved, won some notice from an uncle, who aided him, had to return home to support a widowed mother, and had strength for the study and labour, all before he was fifteen years old. At Paris again he engaged himself to a rich student as a servant, and entered college to outrun all rivals in the contests of scholarship—now daring to point out the errors of Aristotle and raising a war among the collegians, and again coming forth from a severe examination amid the applause of the students. He read the Bible, endured persecution, fought with poverty, became principal of a college and at length heard of the proposed colloquy at Poissy. Anxious for light, he went, listened to the long discussions, wavered, but rallied again. Not by the Scripture quotations of Marlorat, not by the warm eloquence of Beza, not by the arguments of Peter Martyr, who knew Rome so thoroughly, was this independent man convinced. It was by the very champion of the Roman Church.

"Men may reproach me for having abandoned the faith and worship of my fathers," he wrote to the Cardinal of Lorraine some time after the colloquy ended, "but I am used to reproach in human things, and still more can I bear it in things divine. Not for my sake, but for your benefit, I apprise you that I was led to the holy truth by your own speech at the colloquy of Poissy. You admitted that the first centuries of Christianity were a golden age; that all since then grew more and more corrupt. In choosing, then, between the different ages, I took that of gold. Since then I have read the writings of the Reformers and put myself in connection with them; also, for my own instruction, I

have made a commentary on the leading points of doctrine."* Such was one of the results of Protestantism. The martyr's crown would be given him on the awful St. Bartholomew.

It was plainly shown by the colloquy of Poissy, that only one of three policies was possible: 1st. To bring the two great religious parties together by mutual concessions. The colloquy had proved that this was a vain effort. Margaret of Navarre had made this the work of her life, but had failed. Her daughter Jeanne now declared herself an unqualified Calvinist, completely gained by the arguments of Beza.

2d. To let one party exterminate the other. This was still the policy of the Romanists, as shown by the edict of July. Their old maxim was, "Two religions cannot safely exist in one state."

3d. To allow the two communions to live peaceably side by side. This was the plan of the Protestants and of the chancellor. They asked for toleration. Coligny and his noble co-labourers set themselves vigorously to work to overthrow the edict of July, and to obtain another, which would lay the foundation for peace. Their success will cheer us at another hour.

* Waddington, Vie de Ramée. Another great convert was Caraccioli, Bishop of Troyes.

CHAPTER X.

THE WILES OF THE COURT.

(1561–1562.)

THUS ended the famous colloquy of Poissy, the first and last of its kind in France. It had not been entirely a failure. As usual in controversies, each side claimed the victory. If it seemed but a wind-cloud, the rain came speedily after it. It gave thousands courage to ignore the severe edict of July. If the Protestant chiefs might preach at court, and utter their belief in conferences and escape hanging, why might not the people have their own worship in their houses and in the open air?

"We hardly expected to see our pastors again, when they tore themselves from us to go to Poissy," said the people, who wept at their return, as they had at their departure. "And it seems as if they had been at Pentecost, for they preach with the tongue of fire." It was the signal for an advance movement in all quarters. Some large towns and scores of villages declared for Protestantism. One pastor wrote to the veteran Farel: "Three hundred parishes of the Agenois have put down the mass. Four or even six thousand ministers are needed in France."

"Build yourselves a church at Rouen outside of the walls," said the admiral to his favourite Normans; "I will pay for it." But as the walls rose the people had reason to remember Sanballat and Geshem the Arabian, with their jests about the fox whose tramp would shake down the very stones that were laid. Thither went that fine preacher,

Augustin Marlorat, to declare the truth and seal it with his blood.

Turning to the south-east, we see a spare, feeble man entering Nismes. "What is this Switzer doing in our country?" ask certain Romanists. "Has he come here to die?" They knew not that he had been poisoned by their own party twenty-five years before in Geneva, and again beaten on the highway by villains worse than the thieves on the old road to Jericho, and left as one entirely dead. But the next day he drew about eight thousand people to hear him. He entered the pulpit, some whispering in pity, "He will faint before he gets through." His physicians had told him to go thither, rest and breathe the fresher air, and save his life for the cause that was worth it all. He did not faint, nor rest; nor could he, for he was Peter Viret, in mildness the Melanchthon of Geneva, but still the braver man. Through all the South of France and into Navarre his own voice rang with power. Dying daily, he yet lived to a good old age.*

And thus we might make the whole circuit of France, and note the surprising growth of "the new religion." The Reformer might have quoted Tertullian: "We date from yesterday—to-day we are everywhere." In districts of Saintonge they had assembled at midnight in barns, in cellars, in mountain caverns or in the depths of the forest; they had listened to such wonderful men as Palissy the Potter, whose genius was admired by those who hated his principles; they had seen the bishop "fetch certain monks of the Sorbonne, who foamed, slavered, twisted and twirled themselves, making strange gestures and grimaces, and all whose discourses were nothing but an outcry against these new Christians, so that the poor people allowed their woods to

* Schmidt, Leben Virets. The early history of Viret has been traced in "William Farel," Pres. Board of Publication.

be cut down, and the woods being cut, there were no more good preachers;"* and they had quite given up all for lost. But suddenly a secret word passes from one to another; a minister has come. They gather to hear him, half in joy, half in fright. Bold himself, they grow bolder, and the open day rings with their psalms, and the sermon closes with the setting sun. A church rises, branches shoot out from it, the pastor finds himself the Calvinistic bishop of half a dozen parishes.

Let Catherine de Medici bear testimony to the good character of these people in her realm. In the letter which she caused to be written to the pope, apologizing for her lenience, and calling upon him to devise some remedy for the evil of heresy, she had said: "The number of those who have forsaken the Roman religion has increased so greatly that neither the sword nor edicts can suppress them. The new religion has such power upon the minds of men that many nobles and magistrates have embraced it. And, by a singular favour of God, there are among them no Anabaptists, none holding monstrous opinions, nor any who oppose the apostles' creed. All accept the doctrines of the first seven general councils. Some method ought to be devised to recall those who have left the Roman communion, and retain those who still continue in it but who demand a reform."† She recommends the disuse of "forbidden images, exorcisms and superstitions." Sarpi says she wrote with "a French liberty" that vexed the pope to the heart.

Micheli, the Venetian ambassador, who made good use of his eyes as he travelled, reports: "In many provinces

* Morley, Life of Palissy.

† Remonstrances au Pape Pie IV. There is good reason to think this lengthy paper was drawn up under the advice of the chancellor and such men as the Bishop of Valence and Cardinal de Chatillon.

meetings are held, sermons preached and rules of life adopted after the manner of Geneva, and all without any regard to the king's prohibition. Every one has embraced these opinions—priests, monks, nuns (for scarcely a convent has escaped the infection), and even bishops and many distinguished prelates. Excepting the common people, who still go zealously to the churches, all have fallen away; the nobles, most especially those under forty, almost to a man; for although many of them still go to mass, it is only through fear and for the sake of appearances. When they are sure of not being watched, they shun both mass and church.* . . . Religious freedom must be granted them, or a general war must come."

What was the relative strength of the Huguenots at this period? The question is difficult to answer; yet we may have some light upon it from men of different parties. The Romanists had put the number as low as they could, but the Cardinal St. Croix, a sort of titled spy sent out by the pope, reported that "the kingdom was half Huguenot." Was he an alarmist? We quote again from the court letter, written on the eve of the colloquy of Poissy: "The fourth part of this kingdom is separated from the communion of the [Roman] Church; and this fourth part is composed of gentlemen, of the principal citizens, and of those of the lower classes who have seen the world and are accustomed to bear arms, so that the separated do not lack

* "In the suburbs of Toulouse there are free meetings of the godly to the number of ten thousand men. Indeed, fifteen thousand have professed the Gospel. In Auvergne the nobility still rages most obstinately. In Brittany the nobles, almost to a man, have embraced the Reform. Also in Picardy, but the populace cannot be brought over. In Champaigne and the district of Sens they are rather lukewarm. The Burgundians begin to show a bolder spirit (for the truth). Nothing so much retards the progress of Christ's kingdom as the paucity of ministers."—*Calvin's Letters, 12th March*, 1562.

for strength. Nor do they lack for wisdom; for they have with them *more than three-fourths of the men of letters.* They have no want of money to carry on their affairs, having on their side a great proportion of the large and good houses, both of the nobility and the third estate." These statements go far to prove the mistake of those historians who assert that the Protestants formed but a tenth part of the people. In the wars, which soon followed, the tenth part could not have so long resisted the other nine.

The queen requested Admiral Coligny to take the number of the Reformed churches. He presented her a list of two thousand one hundred and fifty: one historian adds to it about five hundred more. He said that these were the organized flocks, under regular pastors. Besides these were many bands of believers not yet gathered into a church. All these people were loyal to the government; they offered their wealth and their lives to the service of their king. But they asked for liberty of conscience and for houses of worship. They could endure the edict of July; it allowed private gatherings, but forbade public meetings, and could not be carried into effect. Catherine inquired what number of troops they could furnish? "Whatever thousands you wish," said Coligny, who thought that their patriotism might bring them upon a footing of toleration. She saw a possible need for their aid. Philip of Spain coolly assumed to be the especial champion of popery and guardian of France. He made his threats: "Let the Huguenots be no longer tolerated, or I will send troops to assist the Catholics." Catherine was aroused to a new danger—that of the Spanish supremacy. The Triumvirs were more than willing to accept the offers of Philip, and she must see that this movement was checked. She sent out her proposal, to be read in all the Huguenot assemblies, "that she was ready to employ the Protestants against the foreigners, who threat-

ened to invade the kingdom under pretence of religion." Philip must learn that France was not Flanders.

"Thanks to the admiral for that!" we hear Andelot say; "but if the queen-mother wishes us to make war for her she must protect us in our worship." He would bring her good-will to the test.

The Reform movement in Paris was astonishing. The ministers had come down from Poissy and preached to vast assemblies outside the walls. Andelot and Condé had taken precautions against the mobbing tendencies of the Parisian Romanists, and they kept about the worshippers a guard of more than one thousand men. The preacher took his place in the open air, around him were the women and children, then armed students and citizens, and then horsemen and the chiefs. A less military look might have been prudent; it might have been less safe.

Beza preached there to audiences of eight thousand; some report five times that number. It can hardly be that "the guild-halls were opened for the Calvinist orators," but we may believe that all classes, nobles and commoners, rich and poor, crowded to hear the preachers. After one of these open-air sermons Beza engaged to go to the Protestant temple in the evening and hear the eloquent Malot. "There will be a riot," said his friends; "we beg of you to keep away!" He yielded at first, but hearing that hundreds of Protestants had already assembled, he feared that some might think him wanting in courage if he did not go. Some Protestants had just been insulted on their way from a sermon, and the Huguenot gentlemen resolved to clean out some of the rookeries of the monks if the like was done again. They gave Beza their company, two thousand of them, perhaps with Catherine's consent, for Captain Gabaston, a Papist, led the escort. Scarcely had the preacher begun when his voice was drowned by a clangour

of bells. The priests of the neighbouring church of St. Médard, outside the walls, were pulling every rope and straining all the brass in the belfry, as if to give the vespers a Sicilian character.

One of the Protestants went over and entreated them to cease the din. High words arose, and in the fray he was shot dead. The bells still rang. Other messengers came, saw the lifeless body of their comrade and raised the alarm. The soldiers rushed to the spot; a thousand swords leaped from their scabbards. Andelot rode to the church, staved in the barred doors, entered and drove the priests into the tower, whence they threw down missiles and sounded the tocsin. This called out the mob, who rushed upon the Protestants. Beza endeavoured to calm the tumult and Malot started the sixteenth Psalm: "Lord, keep me, for I trust in thee," and then went on with his sermon, little suspecting that the "temple" would be in ashes within twenty hours. The riot was renewed the next day. De Thou relates that the priests broke the images in hurling them at their enemies. Beza thinks the Huguenots did their full share in demolishing statues, relics and altars. Perhaps fifty persons were killed and wounded.

Parliament took up the case. Captain Gabaston had thrust ten priests and twenty-six of their gang into prison, but they were set free. The captain and three of his police ordered by the government to be present for quelling any possible riot, were put to death for "assisting the Huguenots!" that is, for not slaying them. Many citizens were hanged on suspicion of heresy, or drowned without any form of trial. Their crime was their effort to stop a street war. The executions were continued through several months, in order to terrify the people.* This affair sealed the fate of the edict of July, which the chancellor and the

* Mém. de Condé; De Thou.

admiral had laboured to overthrow. Strange that this violent proceeding should be so managed as to become a means of greater liberty!

This was not the only outbreak of popular fury in France. The Reformed of Dijon were at worship when the mob arose, rang the bells and made the attack. But the armed Huguenots used force against force. The rioters, finding the war too severe in that quarter, fell to plundering the houses of the citizens. At Cahors the tocsin was sounded, the Romanists gathered, shut the Protestants up in their temple and then set it on fire. The poor worshippers, forcing their way through smoke and flame, were cut down by the savages or outraged. Those who were smothered in the building perished with the less shame and agony. Armed bands entered certain towns, shut the gates and revelled in the pillage and murder of the "hated sectarians."

Catherine was alarmed, not for the Protestants, but for herself. The bishops cried, "Expel these preachers from the kingdom, and if any remain slay them." She saw that this course would lead to a civil war, and probably drive her from France. She had gone too far for such measures, for she had openly given liberty to Beza and invited Huguenot aid. At once she called a council of deputies from the several parliaments to meet her at St Germain. In this unexpected call the voices of the chancellor and the admiral were not publicly heard.

The chancellor came forward with his liberal views—that the two religions must exist together in France, that the State had to deal with men as citizens and not as Christians, that the king ought not to put himself at the head of one of the strong religious parties, that edicts of threatening and terror were in vain, and that the one great remedy for existing evils was to legalize the meetings of the Protestants.

These views prevailed so far as to secure another and milder *Edict of January.*

"Not so much granted to us as is due," said some of the Huguenots, who had hoped for a recognition of equality. "We must restore all churches peaceably taken from the Catholics, even if they remain empty. We must surrender to them all property which they have yielded to us. We are forbidden to build churches for ourselves, and even to meet for public worship within the town walls."

"Very true," replied Coligny and his co-workers, who knew how to estimate their new privileges. "You forget that only yesterday we were a mere sect, utterly proscribed, abhorred and hunted down by both the Church and State. You fail to see that to-day we are recognized as a great religious body, having some rights—"

"Rights!" exclaimed some, who took advantage of the admiral's slow speech. "Where are they granted to us?"

"It is never wise to be too clamorous for our rights," said the admiral. "Let us use well what we have, and the rest may come. We have a right to meet unarmed outside of the walls or limits of the towns; we may collect money to support our pastors; we may hold synods with the consent of the king; we may have preached to us all the doctrines of the Nicene creed, and this sanctions all the doctrines of the holy Scriptures; and if our ministers are not allowed to attack the errors of the Papists, they can give us the more truth. There are other points of restraint, but let us even turn them into privileges, and become more gentle and submissive. By all means let us avoid quarrels, riots and civil war."

"But how long are these privileges to last?" inquired certain Huguenots, still doubtful whether they had gained anything by the edict.

"Until the calling of a general council, and that may be

left to the queen. If so, we hope to secure her favour so that the council will grant us even larger liberty." With this understanding the Protestants began to feel that Coligny and the chancellor had done them great service. But how could whole cities in Southern France go and worship outside their walls? Why restore churches whose priests had forsaken the pulpits and whose people had been converted to the true faith? Why leave them closed without a Papal worshipper? However, Beza and his colleagues advised the Huguenots to observe the edict. They generally heeded the advice, and this edict of January, 1562, proved "the palladium and charter of the Protestants."* The heroic Theodore Agrippa D'Aubigné regarded it as a crowning effort as he looked back upon its workings, and he described it as an edict "not contested between party and party, but granted by the most celebrated assembly of worthies seen in France for years before or since." Let due credit be given to De l'Hôpital and Coligny, who had great power over the wily Catherine.

What said the opposite party? The Guises had been sent on a mission to Germany, but of course they protested against the edict. The Guisards made every effort to persuade the parliaments not to register it as a law. The more violent clergy still cried, "If the nobles will not strike, the people must do it, brother against brother. Ties of blood are made void by heresy. If you do not fall upon the Huguenots, you have no religion." Even Brulart, the chronicler, declared that the measure was "a wholesale approval of that wretched Calvinistic sect, and utterly pernicious to the realm." The warrior Tavannes resisted it in Burgundy, driving from Dijon a large number of the Reformed—some say two thousand. He issued orders for the peasantry "to

* "If the liberty promised in this edict be maintained, Popedom must fall of its own accord."—*Calvin to Sturm, March,* 1562.

massacre all who prayed elsewhere than in the churches, and to deny food, drink and shelter to the expelled rebels." Under a fir tree at Aix the Huguenots had met for worship outside the walls. What horror for them to find every morning, for weeks, men and women hanging from its branches! In the night the mad officials had allowed the work of terror to be done. Thus priest, scholar and warrior hissed on the mob. The parliament of Dijon gave heed to them and refused to approve of the edict. The parliament of Paris declined, but the queen commanded, and it was finally entered, "without approving the new religion." But nobly was it endorsed by the parliaments of Bordeaux, Toulouse, Rouen and Grenoble.

Castlenau paints the success of the Huguenots, without dipping his pen in Papal gall, and says, "Then the ministers of the new religion began to preach more boldly, here and there—some in the fields, others in gardens, openly in every place whithersoever affection or passion led them, or where they could find shelter, as in old ruined buildings, or even barns. . . . The people, curious of novelties, flocked from all parts, Catholics as well as Protestants—some to see the modes of this new worship; some to warn the worshippers. . . . They discoursed in French, quoting no Latin and few texts of Scripture; they commonly began their sermons by speaking against those abuses in the Church which no prudent Catholic could defend. . . . After their sermons they prayed, and sang psalms in French rhyme, with music and numerous good voices, by which they attracted all who were fond of novelty, and many were much edified, so that their number increased every day. . . . They would administer the sacrament after a fashion of their own. After their talk about reforming abuses they distributed alms, which looked very specious to the outsiders, and drew many from the Catholic party."

This candid and devout chronicler does not withhold the fact that "the Catholic clergy" profited by the excellent lesson taught them. The priests and bishops, "led by the force of example, imitation or the desire of improvement, began to consider well the methods of the new preachers, and to take more care of their own flocks, and to attend to their duties. Some began to study the holy writings, lest the Protestant ministers should have an advantage over them. They began to preach more, and warn the people against heresies and novelties in religion."

Here we have one of the first notices of the Jesuits in France—that new order of men who brought into the service of the Roman Church earnestness and self-sacrifice, a willingness to carry the faith into burning India or frozen Siberia, a stealth by which they crept into royal courts and drew princes into their snares, or even slipped into the strongholds of Protestantism and took a seat among the councillors, a craft, a disguising of motives, an accommodation to circumstances, and a policy so plastic that it could readily be shaped for any latitude, any state of society, and every class of men. Taking upon them the name of the Holy One Incarnate, they so perverted it from all candour and honest purpose that the name of Jesuit has come to mean a smiling hypocrite, a shrewd charmer, an intriguer, smooth-tongued and doubled-faced. Jesus declared, "I spake openly to the world; in secret have I said nothing;" the Jesuit did all in secret, and never spake what he meant until he was sure that his arts had prevailed.

Father Lainez had thrown confusion into both camps at Poissy, so that the result might appear a drawn battle. Planting his own banner on the field, he sent forth the rallying-cry to the soldiers of his own order. They must invade France, and do, by whispering and seducing, what Lorraine could not by his inquisition. They must have at

Paris a training-school, a college, a hospital, and all the machinery devised by Ignatius Loyola. They must have their spies at every court, their teachers over every young heir to a throne, their politicians in every cabinet, their share of bishops and cardinals in every election, and their sappers undermining every fortress that was the refuge and defence of liberty. All of which came about in due time.*

While the Protestants were so active, says Castelnau, "the Jesuits likewise and monks mounted the pulpit much oftener, and went through the cities, villages, and even to private houses, warning the people against the Reformed doctrines, and the bishops sent to Rome for indulgences; and some did not scruple to say that it was expedient to prevent the Protestants from preaching, since the government took no notice of them. These proceedings put a great stop to the progress of the Reformed teachers. When the Catholics came to know that the King of Navarre had left the Reformed party, and that he struck in with the Guises, the constable and the Marshal St. André (the Triumvirate), they began to feel more secure."† Their great reliance was the civil arm; that of the truer Protestants had been God alone, and had it so continued with them all, very different would have been the results.

Every holy cause may have its Jehu, its zealots who put their true leaders in alarm. "I fear our friends more than our foes," said Beza, when denouncing the acts of certain Huguenots at Montpellier. To Calvin he wrote, soon after the January edict: "You will scarcely believe how intemperate our people are, as if they wanted to rival our enemies in impatience." Calvin deplored these disorders, while glancing toward the brighter side: "I dare scarcely allude

* Niccolini, History of the Jesuits; Ranke, History of the Popes.

† Mémoires de Castelnau, bk. iii. 5, 6.

to the affairs of France, they are in such confusion. The number of the godly, however, increases daily. The alacrity and zeal are astonishing. But the fickleness of one man (Navarre) is the reason why the parliament of Paris assails Christ with such obstinate fury."*

The position, then, of Antony of Navarre was thought to be of great importance. All parties looked to him with interest; and the more, perhaps, because he was a mere tool, to be used by those who happened to have the mastery. He was unstable as water. He changed with the wind; his very shadow put him in fear. He was not a man to be left to his principles, for he had none; and therefore the Protestants were anxious about him. He was not a man to withstand the soft temptations, for he was worse than weak; therefore the other party caressed him. With ability to serve his country, he had power to ruin her. It requires less talent to do evil than to do good, and small is the capacity necessary for mischief.

We remember how Coligny had a hand in saving the King of Navarre, in getting him into the royal cabinet and into the position of a Protestant chief. It seems, too, that Coligny would have urged the States-general to appoint him regent, had not Antony been such an incompetent prince. The Protestants relied too greatly upon Navarre. Calvin wrote to him, nurtured his faith, rebuked his faults, warned him of his dangers, sent Beza to prop him up, begged, argued, scolded—all in vain. All the sermons and conversations of Beza were lost upon him. All the tears and entreaties of his noble wife were nothing to him. Years before he sought to lead her to an open avowal of the truth, but just now, when she publicly declares herself a Calvinist,

* Calvin's Letters, dcxxv. The amount of correspondence about Antony of Navarre, and the letters to him, show how much was to be gained or lost by his conduct.

he renounces the faith, and abandons all that love or religion had made sacred.

The story is too long, too full of infamy. Every art was employed to ruin a man who had some of the qualities of a successful warrior and to kindle his vain desire for power. But he must forsake the noble Jeanne. The pope would annul the marriage. The Guises at court took him by the hand as their "good cousin," and whispered to him that he might marry their niece, Mary, Queen of Scots; and thus they held the crown of Scotland before his eyes. The legate of King Philip, who wished to get the kingdom of Navarre into his hands, laid before him beautiful maps of Sardinia, and in glowing colours painted the richness of the island and the glory of being the king thereof. Satan was saying, "All this is thine, if thou wilt renounce the Protestant faith!"

The vast Papal machinery was put to the utmost strain in order to bring about what Maimbourg calls "the beautiful conversion" of the King of Navarre. This mountain must be removed, and to the work were applied the ingenuities of the council of Trent. Sarpi tells us, that as "this prince favoured openly the new religion, and was governed entirely by the advice of Admiral Coligny," and as the Protestants were full of hope in obtaining liberty of conscience, "the pope was thrown into great disquietude;" he must "bridle the Protestants;" he must engage Philip of Spain in the business; he must have Jeanne d'Albret put under the ban as a heretic, and divorced; he must rouse all Romish Europe to perceive the magnitude of the work, and must see that this pivot, on which all must turn, be so inclined that France would swing over into the old Papal domain. With great care, in the neat hand of the period, was prepared "a brief of those things which were called into consultation in that holy council of Trent, . . .

first against the King of Navarre, because he doth not well govern the affairs of Charles his ward, King of France, and is an author of spreading abroad that new Calvinist sect in France. . . . That the matter may be performed with greater authority, they have thought good that Catholic King Philip should be the chief in the whole business, and have created him the chief head and captain of this matter." Philip was to take the little kingdom of Navarre from him and his family. "The Duke of Guise shall profess himself the head of the Catholic faction, and levy an army of chiefest men. . . . The business of rooting out the new religion shall be committed to him, and he shall utterly root out the house of Bourbon and all that name, lest of that stock should come some one to take revenge and raise again this new religion." Geneva was to be attacked, and everybody there slain or drowned in the lake. Guise was to kill "rich and mighty men," to get money for the expenses. Such were some of the plottings of the council of Trent.*

Poor weak Antony, tempted, seduced, dazzled and befooled, warned and threatened, sold his conscience for a kingdom in the clouds. He gave himself into the hands of the Triumvirate, of bad women, and of lying legates sent by the pope and by Philip. He avowed himself a Romanist. He was then made to understand by Spain that he must show his sincerity by driving "those pests," the Chatillons, from the court. This he could not do; he dared not attempt.

"We shall win the whole of them yet," said this band of tempters, "except the Coligny brothers, and we can settle them at their homes." Already had they wrought upon the Prince of Condé. He had assembled his friends and de-

* Harleian MSS., in Buckley's Hist. Council of Trent. Compare Sarpi, Pallavicino, Strada, De Thou, etc.

manded satisfaction of Guise for the past injuries—the imprisonment and the sentence of death. "Let it all pass," said Coligny, "but keep clear of court wiles." Yet what were the admiral's feelings when he stood with a crowd of dignitaries and looked upon a great farce? Guise and Condé were to be reconciled. It was to afford a grand scene for the court. After the pompous formalities the duke said, "Sir, I have never been the author, instigator or adviser of your imprisonment."

"And, sir, I hold as wicked and villainous he or they who have been the authors," replied the prince, "And I too," rejoined Guise, "but that does not reflect upon me." Their eyes flashed with the old fire.

"Let the princes embrace and henceforth live as good cousins ought to do," said Navarre, perceiving the hollow sham and fearing a quarrel if they went on so sharply in their apologies. They embraced, and the shrewd Catherine gave a feast to the whole gentry.

And now Coligny stood quite alone in honesty, unselfish patriotism and Christian principle. Even the chancellor seemed to give way before the sweeping power of the new league. Only one more act and the drama would be complete; that was the expulsion of the Chatillons. He knew the plot was carefully laid. He knew what to expect from the queen, the court and the whole Papal forces when this part of the scheme was revealed to him. Perhaps Catherine gave him the information. He saw a cooler and then a more contemptuous treatment of the Reformed preachers at the palace. They were now studiously slighted. If she sat before them she went to sleep; the courtiers jested, the little king played with his dog. The hope of having Beza as court-preacher and fine chapels at every court-residence—at St. Germain, at Meaux, at Blois and Fontainebleau—faded away. Antony had but to beckon, the whole force

of the Duke of Guise would come, and then woe to the man who lingered last to represent Protestantism! The old work of removing every Bourbon, every Chatillon, and even the Montmorencies, would soon begin. Where it would end let St. Bartholomew tell. Coligny began to perceive more of Catherine's double dealing. "I cannot spare you," was the voice of her conduct toward him. "If you depart the Guises will again take possession of everything." She might soon address him as "my friend," and then woe to him.

"I must leave," we hear him reply. "The plot is laid. A Spanish ambassador is coming to make this demand at the peril of the kingdom. For the sake of saving you the trial of dismissing me, and for the sake of my country, I will retreat for a season."

Noble, generous Coligny! Rather than insist upon his rights at the risk of a civil war, he would retire from a high position of influence. He obtained a permission to visit his estates. As the last of his long train of baggage-mules was leaving one of the palace gates the first one of the Spanish legate's train entered the other. The Spaniard, according to the programme, well understood, soon demanded the absolute dismissal of the Colignys. Catherine replied, "The admiral and the Seigneur d'Andelot are absent on their private affairs, and the Cardinal de Chatillon has retired to his diocese, in obedience to my express desire that bishops as well as governors, in these unquiet times, should betake themselves to their charges." The legate was angry, but the Chatillons were safe.

This is the great turning-point in the history of France during the swordless struggles of the Reformation. It is marked by the defection of Navarre and the forced retirement of Admiral Coligny from court. Antony forsook Protestantism; Coligny embraced it with more fervour;

they parted for ever. But not yet did the admiral give up all hope of seeing Catherine directed in a policy of peace and toleration. Truly had Calvin written: "The admiral is the only man on whose fidelity we can count."

What a sight for the Huguenots! King Antony at mass with the Lorraines; Coligny in his castle of Chatillon, mourning over the prospects of the Reformed Church, and seeking comfort in saying, "If we have our religion left us, what more do we want?" If frail mortals may ever indulge a surprise at the righteous permissions of Jehovah, the Protestants might well be amazed at the sudden turn of affairs, and wonder why God allowed the pillars of their hopes to be removed.

Another sight was even more affecting. The tears and prayers of Queen Jeanne touched the hearts of all who had any respect for human love and fidelity. "She excited pity in all who beheld her," says Beza, "except in her husband, so besotted was he!" During fourteen years she had given him her affection, her wealth, her wisdom and all the character imputed to him. And now he was ready to abandon her as a wretched criminal. In his rage at her firmness of faith he maltreated her. Catherine sought to repair the broken ties by advising her to fall in with his humours and change of religion. "Madame," was the reply, "rather than ever go to mass, if I had my kingdom and my son in my hand, I would cast them both into the depths of the sea!" *

This son was Henry, afterward the Fourth of France. She had carefully educated him under a Protestant teacher to whom Calvin gave sage advice † Of him she had indulged the highest hopes, but now he was taken from her and placed under a Romish tutor. Losing all hope, she re-

* Beza, Histoire de l'Eglise. † Calvin to La Gaucherie.

solved to leave Paris.* At her departure she clasped her son in her arms, bathed him with her tears and besought him not to abandon the faith in which he had been educated.

She gave the hand to her heartless husband, and again entreated him to forsake the Guise faction and return to his wife and her kingdom. It was a brave departure, for she knew that plots had been laid for her arrest, and Catherine had defeated them. One more plot was laid of which she was ignorant; Condé was at once informed of it, probably by Catherine. The first night her large train rested at Olivet. Beza came with letters of warning. She pushed forward rapidly and reached Vendôme. The authorities of the town were about to arrest her, by order of the council of which her husband was a member! Suddenly four hundred troopers dashed upon the place and began the work of pillage. She forbade any one to oppose them. They seem to have been sent by her brother-in-law, the Prince of Condé, not only for her safety, but to make reprisals in the war which had fiercely begun.

Once more in her little realm, Jeanne D'Albret took up the work of her mother Margaret, opened schools, founded colleges and hospitals, published a new code of laws and advanced the Reformation. Soon there was not a beggar in Bearn. The children of the poor were educated at the public expense. Drunkenness, usury and games of chance were severely repressed. All the arts flourished with the new faith. Churches increased; pastors were brought from Geneva. Even to this day the people utter the name of "the good queen" with affection and reverence. A Romanist chronicler says: "She was the wisest, most generous, most learned princess of her time; she had in her heart the

* We anticipate the events of the next chapter. The first civil war had now begun, and Condé was at Orleans with an army.

source of every virtue and of every good quality." It is needless to quote the opinions of Protestants; we shall know her hand when we see it again, and believe that "her whole soul belonged to manly things, her powerful spirit to vast affairs, and her unconquerable heart to great adversities."*

The civil wars of France begin to open before us. But they were preceded by various tumults like those of St. Jacques and St. Médard. Out of more than a dozen massacres of that time, there is one which was the especial harbinger of woe. It has been called the spark which lighted the fire of civil war; the first of the series of atrocities which culminated in the black day of St. Bartholomew. To understand how Condé and Guise became the opposing chiefs in the fierce contest, and how Coligny and the Christian Huguenots were drawn into it, we must notice the "massacre of Vassy."†

Among the villages granted to the house of Lorraine was Vassy, in Champagne. Its three or four thousand inhabitants paid tribute to Mary of Scots, and the mother of the Guises dwelt near them, at Joinville, which gave title to one of her sons. Many of the people of this old town favoured the new religion, wanted the gospel, and soon after the colloquy of Poissy a minister of that province was appointed to visit them, and "organize a church according to the word of God." He went, but some of them said, "It is not a good time. The Duke of Guise and his brothers are now at Joinville, and they will march down upon us."

"The Lord will overshadow with his hand those who hunger for his word. Let us try first to meet in secret and

* Freer, Life of Jeanne d'Albret; Colquhoun, etc.

† Discours entier de la Persecution en la ville de Vassy (Mém. de Condé).—*De Thou*, *Beza*, *etc.*

preach Jesus Christ, as your neighbours have done at Ronay," (the edict of July was still in force).

In the house of a tailor there gathered about twenty-five persons, "men and women, faithful and papists; they sang, prayed and heard the sermon; they formed a church, electing four elders and two deacons. They parted to tell the glad tidings. The next day five or six hundred persons came; still more the following days, until they resorted to the open grounds of a mansion. They were led into "the living pastures." While the minister was again with his charge at Troyes, the elders fed the flock by "reading printed sermons on the commandments." Two months passed. The people of the neighbouring villages came, and soon there were nearly one thousand members of the church at Vassy. They met in a barn on the commons, near the Roman Catholic church. It is not true that this was a "Calvinist meeting-house" close by the church, "set there probably in deliberate insolence."

Scarcely had the minister visited again this quiet people, when the Bishop of Chalons, his monk and a train of armed attendants came into town on a December day, all sent thither by the mother of the Guises. She had already threatened her vassals and tenants with severe penalties if they gave ear to the preachings. The bishop seems to have been an ignorant, but not a violent man. He sought to bring about a trial of preaching abilities between the monk and the minister, but forbade the people to hear the latter in the barn. They took their own choice, however, and went, sang cheerfully, listened to the word of God and bowed their heads for prayer. At that moment they heard the steps of the bishop and his party.

"I am the Bishop of Chalons," said he, "and this place belongs to my diocese. Let the people come and hear me."

"Will you preach?" inquired the minister. "I preach through my vicars," was the answer.

"Did the apostles have vicars? Nay, let us hear you. But, as I am first at the desk, let the people hear me first, and if you find any error in my doctrine you can point it out." At this there was a noise in the assembly.

"I come here as the Bishop of Chalons," replied the dignitary; for authority and not argument was to be his reliance.

"And I am here as the minister of Troyes. There none enter to disturb us in our prayers or sermons; why are we disturbed here? The governor of Champagne permits us to have our worship."

"You are not a minister. Who ordained you?"

"I received my office from God, not from men. Listen peaceably to the Gospel, or leave us alone."

The bishop, not sustained by the town officers, nor by his monk, "who said not one word," took his departure. Some of the excited people shouted, "Fox, wolf! send him to school!" Others, in a far better spirit, lifted their hands to heaven and rendered praise to the Lord. They then listened to the sermon, "not without fruit." Some went peaceably to their homes; others dropped in to hear "the monk, much esteemed among the papists as a champion in theology."

Thus far, no violence, no deaths, nothing but earnest sermons, warm debates and a few insults on both sides. The bishop, "who came out of season, went away without success." He reported at Joinville that he had been abused, wrote to the parliament of Paris, but gained nothing, for the new edict of January was now in force. It gave the people the right to meet outside the walls and in old barns and houses. The faithful sent to Geneva for a pastor. In due time Leonard Morel was settled over them.

Antoinette de Bourbon, mother of the Guises, grew impatient. She was delighted when her son, the duke, came with his wife and six hundred armed men, from his mission to the German princes. He and his greater brother had been sent, after the colloquy of Poissy, to make good the old alliances. The conference was held at Saverne. They half promised to root out "the Huguenot heresy," and then reform the French Church on the Lutheran model, adopting the Confession of Augsburg. Brentz heard the cardinal preach two sermons which Luther might have thought orthodox, and he begged that the persecutions in France might cease. "I will end them," replied the cardinal; adding very solemnly, "I have never put a man to death on account of his religion." The Duke of Guise backed up the assertion, saying also, "We will do the Reformed no injury." With these promises fresh in their minds they had reached the castle, where their mother would test their words.* The duke found letters waiting from the lieutenant-general, Navarre, urging him to hasten to Paris. Catherine also hinted that a goodly company of armed men would be quite acceptable. The clearing out of all Protestants from the court, council and cabinet had been almost effected. "You can take Vassy on your way," suggested the mother of Guise. "Those despisers of our holy religion have grown insolent. They call us hard names" (probably some of the indiscreet had spoken bitterly). "You are too patient with them. Your reputation will suffer by your lenience."

Francis of Guise was not so cruel nor so cowardly as to

* "If those furies (the Guises) lately made any dissembling promises at Saverne, the atrocious act which immediately followed has revealed how deceitful all their flatteries were; for scarcely had they quitted the colloquy when they hurried to the perpetration of the most barbarous massacre."—*Calvin to Sturm*, dcxxviii.

sweep down with a regiment upon the Calvinists' barn and shed innocent blood without a show of provocation. He wished, perhaps, to suppress the heresy and let the heretics live. We can afford to be so generous as to doubt whether he was guilty of a premeditated design to massacre a defenceless people. The result was bad enough, at best, and his crime had no good apology His intention was, if De Thou be correct, "to dissolve these conventicles of Protestants, rather than to hurt anybody." On the first day of March, 1562, he and his large retinue came near to Vassy. Hearing a bell ringing at an unusual hour, he asked, "What is the matter? Why that clangour?"

"It is to call the Huguenots together for their preaching," was the reply of a tavern-keeper. "March, march on!" said the duke to his men. "We will see for what they assemble." "We'll Huguenot them," boasted the lacqueys who attended Guise, and who were intent upon pillage.

The company entered the town. At the market-place the provost, the curate and the prior earnestly besought the duke to turn off from the direct road and take the Protestant barn on his way. One story is, that he and his guard stopped at a hotel to dine and sent a band of men to visit the Calvinist meeting-house; another is that he entered the Roman church for mass, his usual custom, and while there he was annoyed by "the Protestant congregation roaring out their psalms. The duke who, for the time had no thought of using violence, sent a message entreating them to be silent for a quarter of an hour; mass would then be over and they could sing as they pleased." * This is very doubtful. His mind was hardly upon dinner or mass, but upon suppressing the worship in the barn. Nor is it likely that the Protestants yet knew that he was in the town.

* Froude; La Popelinière, Daniel.

Their "louder peals" of song were not sent up to heaven to provoke one of their liege-lords on earth.

In some way, sent or unsent, yet scarcely restrained, a motley troop ran on before him, "incensed either by their hatred or by their greediness for booty," and reached the barn. Two German pages shouted out, "Dogs, rebels!" Others took the cry, "Huguenots, heretics, rebels against God and the king!" The door was shut against them, and a more frantic howling and reviling began. The siege must now be undertaken.

There was in the barn and about it a vast audience—some report three thousand persons; nine hundred of them prepared to take the Lord's supper. The pastor, Leonard Morel, was engaged in public prayer for a poor people unarmed, unsuspicious of evil, and not expecting a scene of blood and death.

"In whom do you believe?" was the question put to a poor man who helped to guard the door. "I believe in Jesus Christ," was the heroic answer. He was cut down on the spot. Two others fell beside him. The Protestants outside began to look about for means of self-defence, seizing what came nearest. Then the door was pushed back; not, surely, "half in sport;" it was broken open; a band of soldiers "rushed in by main strength and struck with their naked swords as many as came in their way, few of them making any resistance." Outside retorts were made by some Protestants; blows were exchanged and missiles hurled until the air grew thick with them.

Meanwhile the Duke of Guise came near, sword in hand. He was struck in the face with a random stone. Did he then give the order to fall upon the Protestants and slay them? Perhaps not; it was unnecessary. The murderers were already at their work. They were the more enraged at seeing their chief wounded. They dashed at once upon

the whole assembly, cutting down men, women and children, who could not resist. "A mere huddled and shrieking crowd were easy victims." Out of the windows over the roof they sought to escape, but were shot down. If the duke sought, too late, to restrain his men, the work did not cease until sixty had been killed and two hundred wounded. "I cannot think," says the moderate Lacratelle, "that the Duke of Guise wished such a great effusion of blood; but he evidently sought a tumult. He who, in such a case, does not prevent a massacre gives proof that he encourages violent deeds."

The roar of the tumult was heard by Anne, the wife of Guise, as she was borne on in advance along the direct road. "Suspecting what had happened," says De Thou, "and being of a meek temper, having learned from her mother, the Duchess of Ferrara, not to hate the Protestants, she at once sent a messenger to the duke, beseeching him to spare the lives of so many wretched people." Hers seems the only voice that pleaded for mercy out of all the princely company.

The pastor had preached on as long as he could. When struck with a musket he fell on his knees and prayed for himself, his friends and his foes. Throwing off his cloak, he hoped to escape undetected. He was at length brought, beaten and wounded, to Guise, who said, "Ha! are you the minister? How can you delude these people? You have caused the death of these victims."

"I preach the gospel of the Lord—"

"Does the gospel preach sedition? You shall be hanged at once." Morel was delivered over to the duke's servants, but of all those cut-throats not one was willing to execute the barbarous order. The delay saved his life. Yet he suffered a cruel imprisonment, when starvation almost brought death.

During the carnage, it is said, the Bible was brought from the pulpit to the duke. He took it to his brother, the cardinal, Louis of Guise, and said, "See the titles of these Huguenot books." Testaments and Psalms were also brought and burned.

"There is not much harm in these," was the reply. "This is the holy Scriptures."

"How!" said the duke with an angry oath. "The holy Scriptures! It is fifteen hundred years and more since they were made, and these books have not been printed a year. The book is good for nothing."

"My brother is wrong," said the cardinal, rebuking either his ignorance or his fury, or both, together with his profanity. The duke was pacing up and down the barn floor, biting his beard, as he did when in a rage. He summoned the judge of the district and upbraided him for allowing such meetings. The judge pleaded the last edict. "The edict of January!" Guise exclaimed, putting his hand on his sword; "this steel shall speedily cut asunder this edict, however tightly bound." * We remember his oath about the edict of July.

The next day, when on his road to Paris, he was told that the Huguenots of Vassy had sent complaints to the king. "Let them go," said he with scorn; "they will find neither their admiral nor their chancellor." He counted upon the removal of Coligny as a great victory. Still, he had his soberer thoughts, and did not object when parliament sent to Vassy its president, Christopher De Thou (father of the historian), a learned and just man, wealthy and aristocratic, and said to have been the first citizen of Paris, not of the nobility, who had a coach. He examined into the affair, and certainly did not exempt Guise from blame. So anxious was the duke to save his character

* Davila.

from the atrocious charge that he obtained affidavits from his own party to show that the Protestants were the aggressors. In his dying hour he declared that he was not the author of the massacre. Had he not also denied that he secured the imprisonment of Condé? Even if not the deviser of a plot, he had a large share in the guilt of bringing about the massacre, which was "the signal of a civil war, the most bloody of any in the memory of nations."

CHAPTER XI.

THE UPRISING OF THE HUGUENOTS.

(1562.)

A NEW period opens—that of the resistance. It begins in a chaos of bloodshed. It runs into the civil wars. On the part of the Huguenots it is marked by the organization of an army and by an arrest upon the advance of the Church. The sword glitters; piety declines. "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."

Catherine was at Monceaux, an undefended château near Paris, trying to save herself and her regal son from the Triumvirate. Condé was in Paris, with his eyes opened to the fact that he had been sadly befooled by those who wished to scatter his party to the winds and ruin all his hopes. The scales fell when Coligny was thrown out of the councils and when the horrors of Vassy caused him to shudder. Other massacres were fast succeeding. To heaven rose the cry that God would send a deliverer upon earth. He imagined that he was the man. Not yet would he and Coligny act together under one policy. The one was quite ready to draw the sword, the other was housed at Chatillon, waiting for the mightier Arm to be made bare.

Theodore Beza led a commission to Monceaux, appeared before the council and demanded the punishment of the murderers at Vassy. If the Duke of Guise and his followers went free, then law was at an end. Edicts were but dust in the eyes of the people, under cover of which the papists might fall upon every Huguenot barn, or temple, or

house throughout the land. Beza grew eloquent as he told how hundreds of Protestants were perishing, "stabbed, stoned, beheaded, strangled, burned, starved to death, drowned and buried alive." The council was silent at the dreadful recital, until Antony of Navarre attempted a defence. "They threw stones at my brother of Guise. Princes were not made to be stoned. . . . Mark me! Whoso shall touch but the end of his finger shall touch my whole body." Aside he muttered that Beza ought to be hanged.

"Let the duke point out the authors of the outrage," was the reply. "It is in truth, Sire, becoming the Church of God to receive blows—not to give them. Yet remember that it is an anvil which has worn out many a hammer." *

Catherine intervened. She ordered Guise to appear at court without an armed guard, and St. André to retire into the Lyonnais and take charge of his government. But her will was nothing. St. André and Montmorency rode away to meet Guise and his train, as if to give welcome to a conqueror.

And Guise was coming. The tramp of his six hundred horsemen was almost heard at the gates. Might he not sweep down upon the Protestants, who were still holding vast meetings outside the walls? They had their "Jerusalem." The marshal, Francis Montmorency, advised them to adjourn for a few days, lest there should be a riot; but the ministers replied, "This would be confessing that we

* Hist. de l'Eglise; Mém. del Castelnau. "Our brother Beza is exercised with hard trials. By the treachery of Julian [Beza's name for Antony], he narrowly escaped, a short time ago, from being dragged to execution, along with many others; but God miraculously brought to naught such infamous attempts."—*Calvin to Peter Martyr, 16th March,* 1562. The latter died at Zurich in the following September.

are in the wrong." They asked for a royal guard to protect their assemblies. Beza preached, wearing a breastplate, while Condé and about four hundred armed gentlemen formed the outer circle of worshippers. It was a time of peril. The wife of Montmorency was saying to the proud old baron, "Defend the faith"—which meant, "Destroy the Huguenots." But her son was marshal of Paris, and we always find him a moderate man.

On the afternoon of March 20th, Condé was returning from "Jerusalem," followed by an immense train of people, when he came upon the Duke of Guise and his brilliant retinue.* A clash was expected; but the two chiefs coolly saluted each other and passed on their way. Guise had entered the St. Denis gate—one designed for kings—and as he rode through the streets he was hailed by the people with loud shouts: "*Vive le Guise!* the hero of Vassy, the defender of the faith, the Joshua who slays the Canaanites, the Judas Maccabeus of his age!" Montmorency and St. André were at his side, a sign of government favour. The citizens crowded about his horse; they kissed his robes; they rushed to his hotel; they offered him large sums of money for "the wars of religion." But he was cool; and well he might be, for he was master of the situation. He sent his compliments to Condé, with the offer of his services, whose full value the prince was at no loss to understand. It was a strange and alarming sight: two rival chiefs in one city, each having a strong force about him, his hotel in a state of defence, and resolved not to yield an

* "Now, though that apostate has summoned the Guises to court [not Paris], in order to introduce extreme measures, yet Beza trusts that the Church will be so increased that they will not dare attempt anything afterward. The first collision is to be dreaded, unless God come to our aid. Serious threats and terrors everywhere hang over us."—*Calvin to Peter Martyr, 16th March*, 1562.

inch, nor to let pass any insult. Catherine advised, or commanded, them to retire. Guise could afford to do it, for he held the very souls of the people: from that day Paris continued to be a Guisean city. But for Condé to forsake capital and court seemed to be his utter ruin. It was his own brother Antony who dislodged him.

The prince saw no hope, no help. His fortunes were at the lowest ebb. He might, perhaps, have held Paris if his friends had supported him in season. Beza asserts that the rich members of the Church in Paris had not come forward with the needed funds; that courier on courier failed to rouse the admiral out of his castle; and that the Huguenot nobles preferred to take refuge in their provincial homes.* Yet he led out of the capital nearly one thousand followers, and fixed his quarters at Meaux, some thirty miles eastward from Paris. Thence he wrote to Coligny: "Not want of courage, but want of support, has constrained me to leave the capital. I conjure you to hasten and join us with such troops as you can muster. Cæsar has passed the Rubicon, has seized Rome, and his standards are already waving in the field." Guise was Cæsar, Vassy the Rubicon, and Condé was the wandering Pompey.

Why did not Condé dash upon Monceaux, seize Catherine and the king, and thus wrest the government from the usurpers and have it all upon his side? He did not know how acceptable that would be to the queen-mother.

* La Noue justifies the prince for not trying to hold Paris, because there were against him the judges, the clergy, the parliament, the city authorities and the populace. Besides his three or four hundred gentlemen there were only about as many university students, and still fewer of the bourgeois. "What were these against so many? A mouse against an elephant! They held their own, however, until the lords and princes (Guises) forced them to throw up the game. It was doubtless a high and generous design to endeavour to establish the gospel in Paris, but with such a poverty of means it was impossible."

Besides, he had no plot to overturn the administration. "I was present," says La Noue, who had dropped his books and taken arms, "and I affirm that there was no premeditation. Most of the nobles had been more intent upon securing religious liberty than upon providing for the defence of their religion. Yet, having heard of the massacre of Vassy, and urged, partly by good-will, partly by fear, they resolved to come near to Paris, imagining that their protectors might have need of them. Thus the chief of them set out from the provinces, some with twenty or thirty friends, carrying arms concealed and lodging in the hostels or fields, paying their way until they joined the principal body. Many have assured me that these motives alone put them in motion, and I have heard the prince and the admiral confess the same." Had there been a Renaudie among them, the king might have been in the power of the Huguenots.

Why did not Catherine throw herself and children into the hands of Condé? She evidently saw her mistake in allowing the Triumvirs to seize the government and Guise to hold Paris. But Condé would be declared a rebel, and she dared not risk such an escape from the Guiseau tyranny. On the side of the oppressors there was power, and if she voluntarily took the part of the Huguenots, Rome and Spain would crush them all together. If Condé would only take her and the king by surprise, it would be a relief. She took secret flight to Melun, and thence sent messages to the prince in such terms that he would take his commission: "You will take care to preserve the mother, the children and the kingdom for him whom it concerns. . . . You will aid me in preserving the royal authority of my son from the greatest enemy that you or France can have." * The

* "What a fine thing to be a Florentine!" says Laval, referring to the ease with which Catherine explained away these letters afterward.

prince made good use of the letters sent him, and when the Huguenot nobles read them, they thought they were not simply defending their own cause, but the very crown. Beza says, "They will serve as a testimony to posterity that this prince undertook the war for the defence of religion and at the express desire of the said lady." This, then, was one object—to rescue the royal family from the usurpers.

But he must have an army to hold the king when he should possess him. What of the admiral? For a month he had been at Chatillon, plunged in the deepest grief, and "avoiding the sight of every human being." A civil war had horrors which must, if possible, be averted. Visitors came—his two brothers, Briquemaut and some of the leading Protestant nobles. They pleaded the dishonour of deserting the prince and of allowing the massacres to run on unchecked. The people looked to him for their protection.

"But where are your means of war—your arsenals, your ammunition, your money? Shall we not rather wait in patience for better times, take such shelter as the laws afford, and pray God to avert the woes which threaten us? Think how rapidly our Church has grown and what persecution it has endured. The blood of the martyrs, instead of crying aloud for vengeance, has been the seed of the Church, growing most when most harrowed and ploughed by our foes." Coligny shook the minds of these strong men, and quite won them over to his own views of non-resistance.

The wife of the admiral heard these conversations. She

They are found in Mém. de Condé. In the Vie de Duplessis Mornay, written by his wife, she tells us that her first husband bore some of the messages, and that he was ordered to beg Condé to "be the protector of the mother and the child."

knew the struggles* in his soul, and almost wished herself a Deborah that she might rouse the heroes to defend the country and the true Church. One night, two hours after he had fallen asleep, he was awakened by her heavy sighs, and he asked the cause. "It is with great regret, sir," she replied, "that I trouble you with my anxieties, but, seeing the members of the body of Christ thus cruelly torn in pieces, shall we, who are of his body, remain insensible? You do feel them, I know, with all your strength to conceal your feelings; but blame not your faithful wife if she seem to have more confidence than respect and pour the flood of her sorrows into your bosom."

The admiral was reminded that while he was resting amid comforts, some of his Christian brethren were lying in dungeons, some in the bare fields with the storm beating upon them, and some dying under the most cruel tortures. He urged that war might only increase the number of sufferers. "Your argument leaves your brothers hopeless," she said. "It does not show a strong faith in God. He has given you the genius of a great captain; how can you refuse to employ it for the relief of his children? You have confessed the justice of their cause. Sir, my heart bleeds for our slaughtered brethren. Their blood cries to Heaven, and Heaven will cry against you if any perish whom you might have saved. You have told me that your conscience keeps you from sleep. It is God's preacher. What account will you render in doomsday?"

Coligny had one more appeal. "Lay your hand on your heart," said he, "and tell me—could you receive the news of a sad defeat without a murmur against God or a reproach upon your husband?"

* "I do not estimate the external struggles in which he (Coligny) was engaged, by any means, so highly as those he endured within. The former were the lot of every man living."—*Ranke.*

"I could. But why any fear of defeat? You have often boasted of the strength of the Protestants." No man knew that strength better than Coligny.

"Are you prepared to endure the opprobrium of your enemies, the reproaches of your friends, the treachery of partisans, the curses of the people—confiscation, flight, exile—the insolence of the English, the quarrels of the Germans—shame, poverty, hunger and, what is more, the sufferings of your children? Are you prepared to see your husband branded as a rebel and dragged to a scaffold, while your children are disgraced and begging their bread of their enemies, or serving them as scullions and slaves? I give you eight days to reflect upon it, and when you are prepared for such reverses then I will march."

"The eight days are already expired," was the heroic answer. "Go, sir, where duty calls. Do not put hope in your enemy's virtue; make use of your own. Heaven will give you victory."* It is said by some writers that Coligny was entreated by Catherine to haste to the rescue, and that he said, "This is enough to shield me from the charge that I am taking up arms to advance religion by war."

The next morning he mounted his horse, collected his tenants, mustered what troops he could, took the road to Meaux, joined the prince and, with no little emotion, read the words on his banner: "It is sweet to brave danger for Christ and our country."

Nothing but a great cause could have united two such men as Condé and Coligny. They had differed hitherto; they would differ to the last, and yet heartily support each other. Condé was nervous, buoyant, at court frivolous, in

* "I do not give this as a fabulous ornament, but as a fact that I have been told by the very persons concerned."—*D'Aubigné, Hist. Universelle.* There is, however, some doubt cast upon the story.

camp as ardent for combat as ever he had been for pleasure. The little man, who ever talked and ever smiled, whose humour was altogether French, was loved by his soldiers. His peculiar liveliness and enthusiasm were imparted to the whole rank and file under his command; they caught his spirit; their force was doubled. With him, impulse was genius; the impression of the moment was his best. Valorous as a warrior, he still lacked the moral firmness essential in a Christian. He fought rather from hatred of tyranny than love for the Protestant faith. "He was," says Brantome, "ambitious rather than religious." Easily provoked into a war, he was quite as readily persuaded into a peace. In attempting to manage a royal cabinet, he taught an intriguing court how to manage him.

Coligny was almost the reverse—thoughtful, cautious, devoted to a principle, suspicious of an impulse, directed by conscience and mindful of his responsibility to his king, his country and his God. His was the material of which the serious Huguenot, Puritan and Covenanter were made. More like Cromwell than like Condé, he would have been at the head of the army what Calvin was at the head of the Reformed Church. The word "discipline" thrice given would have been his three rules of warfare. His love for it left no space for ease to a wild, reckless, unruly soldier. Success in battle, he thought, depended as much on obedience as upon courage; his mode was not to raise a yell, make a rush and sweep all before him; the living hurricane should move according to laws. Not so impulsive as Condé, he had a persistence not found in the Bourbons. Although trained under his raving, swearing, mass-lipping old uncle, he went calmly to his work and coolly finished it. A victory did not exalt him more than a defeat cast him down. If Condé could electrify an army at the approach of a battle, Coligny was the man to fortify it at the moment of

a rout. These were great qualities. But that which made his character grand in that age was his profound faith, his simple love of truth, his high morality, his devotedness to the right, his hidden life with God. "He was," Castelnau tells us, "one of the first officers of the crown, and worthy, for his great abilities, to be at the head of any party. And, as he was more devoted to his religion than other people, he acted the censor among the young nobles and gentry, curbing their unruly passions by a certain severity which was natural and becoming." Of all the Huguenot chiefs he was the lion-hearted, and neither wife, nor comrade, nor king could ever charge him with infidelity.*

As the troops increased every day, Condé thought of dashing upon Paris and holding it for the king. "Nay," said Coligny, "that city is so devoted to Guise just now that it would require all our soldiers to keep down the citizens. My plan is to form a line of defence upon the Loire and hold all Southern France." He knew that the great strength of Protestantism lay south of the river. This plan was adopted.†

Orleans was chosen as the central point and the chief rendezvous. It seems that Catherine was to go thither and be taken in that city, whose commandant was "neither Catholic nor Huguenot," waiting to see what side she would choose. She was now on the way at Fontainebleau. Andelot was sent to capture it, six days after the encampment at Meaux. Condé and Coligny were to stay the advance of the enemy, or seize the king if he were still delayed.

It was too late. The Guises had taken the matter in hand. The old Montmorency and Navarre had frightened Catherine by coming suddenly to Fontainebleau with a strong force. The pope's agent had moved them. "I came here" (Paris), wrote St. Croix, "to urge them to visit her

* Puaux; Brantome. † Lacratelle.

majesty in haste, and hinder the Bishop of Valence, who is ever at her ear, from persuading her to take some extraordinary step. They hope to prevent her from going to Orleans." Catherine resisted, saying, "Deserted and betrayed as I am, I shall defend my son, your king."

Guise drew Antony aside and said, laughingly, "She resist! What do we care for her? She can stay or quit the country, just as she likes; it is nothing to us." Antony returned and told her that she could do as she pleased, but that he was the proper guardian of the king, and he should conduct Charles to a place of safety. He ordered the royal apartments to be dismantled and the furniture removed, for in those days the carpets and tapestry were carried about with the court. Old Montmorency was swearing and beating the servants; Catherine was smothering her grief, holding the weeping Charles by the hand, and completely a prisoner. Some confidential attendant slid into her room and she whispered, "Ride post-haste and tell Condé to rescue us on the road." It was a sad journey to Melun, to the castle of Vincennes and to Paris, into which Guise led the royal family only eight days after his triumphal entry from Vassy. Charles was in tears half the time; his mother said not a word. She had still clearer light upon the designs of the Triumvirs, if we may credit the story that she overheard St. André advise his colleagues to tie her in a sack and throw her into the river. This decided her speedy conversion to their policy. It is more probable that she saw on which side the greater power lay, and self-interest is always sufficient to account for her conduct. What is certain is, that she was no longer a friend to the Huguenots.

The prince and Coligny struck across to St. Cloud, but there learned that Catherine and her son were just beyond their grasp. On hearing the news, Condé checked his

horse, sat for some moments in deep thought and said, as the admiral rode up, "We have plunged in so deep that we must drink or drown." They drew the rein and took the road to Orleans. At Angeville the prince had a fresh letter from Catherine, and he lingered there for several hours. A messenger came saying, "Hasten! The troops of Guise are getting ahead of you." The cavaliers sprang into their saddles, and two thousand men went galloping to the gates of the town, the best mounted running over the rest. The peasants laughed at the sight. They saw the road covered with hats, cloaks, portmanteaus, crippled servants, lamed horses, and all that might be flung away in the race; "and they imagined," says La Noue, "that all the madmen of France were sweeping over the earth like the winds of Languedoc." It was well, for "by these new forces the town, which was of the utmost consequence, fell into their hands." As the prince rode through the streets they were lined with expectant Huguenots, singing psalms of joy and welcome. *Vive l'Evangile!* was the shout.

"And what of us?" asked the Roman Catholics, who suspected a sacking and a butchery. "You shall be safe," replied the prince; "your governor shall still retain his command." But this officer declined, saying, "Where there is a prince of the blood, it is not reasonable that a simple gentleman should command the city." The place was well chosen. A rich country lay around it, and it was a central refuge for the Huguenots.

The Prince of Condé was elected general-in-chief, but all minds were turned upon Admiral Coligny as the man of more spiritual strength. His first care was to secure a powerful union for the defence of religion. A paper was drawn—a sort of Solemn League and Covenant. It was to be adopted with religious services. A sermon was preached. The Lord's supper was administered and the presence of

the Captain of their salvation invoked. Then the Calvinist chiefs took a solemn oath to maintain the alliance, and gravely signed the document, the name of the prince being first subscribed. These nobles were among the noblest in France. Among them were many relatives of Condé; the three Chatillons were uncles of his wife; Antony Croye, Prince of Porcien, the husband of his niece; La Rochefoucauld, the greatest baron of Poitou, was his brother-in-law, and the Rohans were his cousins. Count de Grammont had led up six thousand Gascons; Montgomery, whose lance struck Henry II., came with the Normans; Rohan led the Dauphinese; Genlis the Picards. Andelot brought five hundred Bretons, and Soubise an array from the ocean shores. Perhaps more than one of these chieftains had heard the call from a high quarter. Count la Rochefoucauld had received a letter from Catherine. "It came when he was walking in his great hall at Verteul," says his secretary, De Mergey. "He read it, leaned for some time at his window, and then asked me what he should do. Being pressed for an answer, I said, 'Do as your queen and king command you.' He smiled, saying, 'Such is my determination.' He summoned his friends, and in fifteen days took the field with nearly three hundred gentlemen and their trains, and with this fine troop he found the prince at Orleans."

What was there requiring their solemn oath? To what did they swear? That they had only the honour of God before their eyes, that they sought to liberate the king and queen from the Triumvirate, that they would maintain the edict of January, that they wished to punish only those who had wantonly violated it, that they would endeavour to prevent all blasphemy, violence, pillage, and all acts forbidden by the law of God, that they would support among them good and faithful ministers, who should teach them

God's will, and that, for these objects, they would employ their bodies, their properties and their very last drop of blood. Their league should continue only until the young king attained his majority. So soon as he was of age they would submit to him in all obedience. They appointed Condé, being a prince of the blood, the protector and defender of the Protestant religion, and swore to obey him so long as he should follow the advice of his three councils. Among the chief of the first council were the admiral and his two brothers, for Cardinal Odet was now a firm Protestant.

"Maintain the January edict and stop these terrible massacres," was the real point of the demand. It was still a law, but rudely violated even by Montmorency, the man who pretended to revere law. It was this widespread outrage upon those for whom the edict was framed that caused the uprising of the Protestants. It was not that they sought to put down Romanism; not to propagate their own faith by the sword; not to promote intolerance. It was in self-defence. It was for the law, and, as they claimed, for the king. "Liberty of worship was the sole object they sought," says Lacratelle. "If that had been granted, they would not have risen. Francis of Guise made all the trouble, by swearing to cut that edict in pieces, and by violently seizing upon the king and queen. This brought up Condé and Coligny as the avengers of an infant king. This caused the first war of religion. Catherine de Medici, by her perfidy, furnished the pretext for the second and third. This edict of January appears often; it is the eternal pivot on which turns every sincere plan of peace."*

Coligny revived his rules of military discipline. So strictly were the plundering of houses and the pillage of churches forbidden that his own eyes were often upon the watch. One night the great church at Orleans was entered

* Lacratelle, Histoire de France, xviii. Siècle; *Resumé.*

and the work of destruction began. Coligny and Condé hastened to the spot in order to quell the disorders. The prince saw a Huguenot standing on a ladder ready to break an image, and pointed an arquebuse at him. "My lord," said the soldier, "have patience till I break this idol and then let me die, if you will." Such coolness proved that the man went at his image-breaking with a good conscience.

Coligny suggested the plan of attaching to each regiment a chaplain, who should recite prayers aloud every morning and evening preach the word of God and exhort both chiefs and soldiers to observe good morals and Christian principles. Cromwell was not the first military chieftain who cultivated a religious enthusiasm in his army. Never was there a braver body of men than "the white coats" of the admiral, and, so long as they were under him, there was never a better-conducted band. We are told that his manner was imposing, his gravity checked officers from immorality and his severity was a restraint upon the soldiers.

"Their modest behaviour was beyond example," is the testimony of the Romanist Varillas. "Each company in this army had its minister, and daily prayer was said throughout the camp. Their songs were psalms. When they played they played for sport, and blasphemy was never heard among them. No *filles de joie*, as among the Catholics, loitered in their tents." It reminds us of the army of King David in contrast with that of Absalom. Lacratelle also speaks of "the touching character of the ordinary prayers* used by the soldiers in the army of Condé. No doubt Theodore Beza composed them, and they do more credit to his talent and his heart than all his controversial writings." This author quotes the prayer to be used by a soldier on guard, a part of which is: "We pray thee for all our court, for our young king and sovereign prince.

* Mém. de Condé.

May it please thee to bless his youth and preserve him amid the perils that now surround him through the evil schemes of the enemies of the crown and the peace of this kingdom. Do thou give him grace to favour his true and loyal subjects and servants, and to seek thy glory in all things. Be merciful to his brothers, his mother the queen, the princes of the blood, and to all the true lords of the council." And yet these were the men so often branded as "rebels and infidels, worse than Turks."

By Coligny's rules there was a terrible penalty upon the soldiers who "oppressed the poor commons." La Noue affirms that on their marches these Huguenots "neither despoiled nor misused their hosts, but paid honestly for all they took. . . . Of the Catholics I will say that, at the beginning, they were likewise well ordered, and did not much annoy the commons."

The call had gone secretly forth through the land for all the Huguenots to furnish men and money. The responses from the two thousand churches were cheering. Old soldiers of St. Quentin and Calais marched to Orleans. Castles, towns, cities and districts declared for the prince, and that almost on the same day. One may take the map, and with Orleans in the centre of France, and with the Loire as the great line of defence, glance at the strongholds. On the river were Orleans, Blois, Tours, Angers and Nantes; then southward were Poitiers, La Rochelle, Montauban, and indeed those wide regions of Gascony and Navarre, and the old Albigensian districts stretching from Toulouse to Nismes, up to Lyons and over into Dauphiny. Then on the north were Havre, Caen, Dieppe, Rouen, Troyes and Chalons; and eastward were open roads for bringing troops from the lands beyond the Rhine. What an army might those Huguenots put into the field!

But the enemy was striking everywhere. "The blood-

bath of Vassy"* was repeated, and most of the Protestants had enough to do to defend their own homes. Some have thought that the massacres of 1562 were as bloody as those of the St. Bartholomew, ten years later. They made the Huguenot uprising almost purely defensive. At any hour the Bible-reader might have his doors broken down, his house robbed, his family butchered, his dwelling burned; or the temple where he sang his psalms might be assaulted, and he might be slaughtered along with his pastor and his brethren. There was no protection in the law, in the edicts, in the government, nor in the word of a king. Even flight to other lands was an exposure to thieves and murderers. What could he do? Lie resistless? Human convictions and ethics, if not the gospel, forbade it, when death was the almost inevitable result. Recant, apostatize and go to mass? His conscience forbade it; he abhorred the hypocrisy. Take up arms, not on a private account, but for the public good? That seemed to be the only remedy; a war in the name of God and for the highest of all human rights.

Not that every Huguenot lifted his banner in God's name, for political motives controlled too many. Multitudes sprang to arms under excitement. In some instances they went beyond the peaceable capture of their own towns, but rarely, if ever, without provocation; and we should remember that in every Huguenot congregation there were many who were not professors of religion. The town of Valence, below Montauban, on the Garonne, was already in the hands of the Protestants. Guise ordered La Mothe-Gondrin, who was governor of Dauphiny, to seize it. But his force was not strong enough to hold it, so that the next day the Huguenots of the district fell upon the town, set fire to the house of the Papal captor, drove him out, slew him and several of his party. Among the slain was a pro-

* Soldan, Geschichte des Prot. in Frankreich: Leipzig, 1855.

vost, on whom was found a letter from Guise ordering him "to massacre all the gospellers, old and young."

In Lyons the two parties had long been struggling for the mastery. The Protestants were strong. One day in June, 1561, a Huguenot had his hatred against idolatry aroused by seeing a priest carrying "the host," and he tried to snatch it away. There was a riot at once. The cry arose, "Down with the heretics! Throw them into the Rhone!" and the Rhone was soon bearing many of them to the sea. This was the prelude. The horrors of Vassy were enough to rouse the spirits of those who still remained. But the Romanists took that massacre as their signal, and on the night of April 12, 1562, they rose and murdered, in cold blood, about a dozen people—a son taking the life of his own mother. The governor brought more soldiers into the city. Suspicious of evil, the Huguenots were resolved not to be defenceless, and they called in two hundred men from the neighbouring towns. Some of Condé's soldiers came. The minister, Jacques Rufi, acted as a captain. At the end of the month, when all was ready, twelve hundred Protestants met by night in their temple, invoked the blessing of the Highest, then marched forth, made short work, and in an almost bloodless way got the complete mastery of the city. Only three persons were slain and three wounded. But they followed this up with the sack of convents and churches and the expulsion of all friars and nuns. The mass was abolished, liberty of conscience proclaimed and a treaty made, by which the senate was to be composed of twelve Huguenot and twelve Catholic members. Still the excesses did not cease. And here we may listen to Calvin, who wrote to "The Church at Lyons." He says: "We have news that causes us great distress. We know that in such disturbances it is difficult to hold the bridle so tight as is desirable. But there are things insupportable,

which we must rebuke, or be traitors to God, to you and to Christianity itself. It is unbecoming for a minister to play the trooper or captain, but it is even worse when one quits the pulpit to carry arms. Worst of all is it to go to the governor of a town, pistol in hand, glorying in force, and threaten him, saying, 'Sir, you must yield; we have the power in our hands to compel you.' We tell you frankly that this is as disgusting to us as the sight of a monster. It grieves all who have any piety. Nor was this enough for them; they must scour the country, carrying off booty and pillaging the cattle, even after the Baron des Adrets arrived as governor. . . . We have been told that the plunder from St. John's church was put up at auction. True, M. Rufi had charge of these affairs, but you should have checked him. If he does not submit, let him go where he can erect a church apart. . . . Put an end to all these acts of robbery."* So much for the great case so often held up against the Protestants. We shall not now offset it by a score of public outrages committed by the papists.

From the court side we have a picture, quite recently brought to light and drawn by the confidential secretary of Catherine for the eyes of the French ambassador in Spain. The "exchanger" is the King of Navarre, who has turned his coat and is held as the contemptible tool of those who have deluded him.

"An infinite number of places have deserted our cause,

* Calvin's Letters, dcxxix. "As to this destruction of images, I can only repeat what I have always preached, that such proceedings do not at all please me."—*Beza.* Of these acts of violence Castelnau testifies: "The Prince of Condé was very angry at them, because they were directly against the declaration which his party had issued, and they might provoke the Catholics to rise with greater fury. He sent orders to all the cities that the January edict should be strictly observed."

so that the king is no longer obeyed; at least the prince (Condé) does not regard what is written from hence, and he says that he does everything for the king's service, and that those around his majesty and the queen-mother detain them as prisoners. In every town the greatest license prevails. All the churches are ruined and the churchmen driven away. Amidst this desolation, I leave you to imagine the murders, pillage and violence committed. They (the Huguenots) hold the banks of the river (Loire) from Nevers to Nantes, so that not a soul do they suffer to pass without searching him, seizing his letters and detaining the king's moneys. . . . The queen-mother does all in her power to settle affairs, but I know that it must be all in vain. One faction insists on establishing a new religion; the other defends the old by fire and sword, at the expense of the king's poor subjects and the ruin of the kingdom; and all through the counsels of that fine league.* . . . The *exchanger* says that his Catholic majesty (Philip) must send ten thousand infantry and three thousand cavalry to our aid. . . . The queen-mother is made mad with rage, perceiving that the kingdom is partly lost. She knows not what security she can take for herself and her children; for she can expect nothing from the party now in the ascendant, except their dominion over her. The *exchanger* understands nothing, perceives nothing; it is not possible for any man to act worse than he does. He knows not to what saint to vow himself, and in these negotiations he is turned by every wind. The Prince of Condé is at the head of from seven thousand to eight thousand horse; and such is the disposition here that, without the great favour of

* Between Philip of Spain and the French government at Peronne, or the league formed at Trent by certain members of that famous council.

God, it will not be long before we come to a hard encounter."*

Every courier brought woeful tidings to Condé; every refugee told of Huguenots beaten, driven from their homes or murdered in the streets; every fresh band of troopers reported the strategy by which they evaded the soldiers sent out to waylay them, and many a nobleman told how he had broken down his three or four horses on his ride to Orleans. The city of fifty thousand inhabitants became a refuge for women and children escaping from violence and following husbands and fathers who had taken the field. The Princess Eleanor, braving perils and sickness, brought her eldest son to join the heroic Condé. Ministers enough came from desolated parishes and from Geneva to fill up Coligny's list of chaplains, and among them Theodore Beza. The third national synod was held on the twenty-fifth of April. The members of it did not smother their patriotism while renewing their adoption of the confession of faith. They prayed that God would keep his people from taking revenge upon their persecutors and teach them to love their enemies. But they could not rebuke the spirit of self-defence which had turned many of their churches into barracks or recruiting-offices.

Catherine had received a message from Condé, stating his reasons for extreme measures. She sent the Baron la Garde to assure him that "she would never forget what he might do for her and her son." But just when the messengers of peace were in conference there came news of an outrage at Sens, which caused the prince to say, "I cannot lay down arms until those most cruel enemies are driven out of France." He meant the Guises. It was said that the Cardinal of Lorraine had instigated the rioters in that city, of which he was archbishop. A Huguenot uttered his

* Freer, Life of Jeanne d'Albret.

disgust at a Romish procession. The bells rang and the mob revelled for three days in murder, sparing none of the Reformed and ceasing only for want of victims. It is related that the child-king was one day playing in Paris on the banks of the Seine, when he saw a dead body floating by and asked what it was. "It is one of your majesty's subjects coming to demand justice," was the reply. The silent appeal was not likely to reach his heart. St. Croix wrote, "Since the massacre at Sens another great slaughter of eighty Huguenots has happened, and some thirty of their houses have been burnt in that city." Chantonnay's exulting words went to Philip of Spain: "Already in many parts of this kingdom the Catholics have risen against the Huguenots, who have had the worst of it; and in some places the preachers were burnt in the market-place." *

"Lead us within sight of the enemy; that is the best way to negotiate," said Andelot. "March upon Paris," said Coligny, who had arrested a courier with letters to the court. "The Triumvirs have but a rabble in their hands, whom a drum will scare. It is better to have the capital than half the kingdom." Condé refused, and, perhaps, wisely, for the king's forces were not so weak as represented. Besides, he did not wish to ruin himself politically. He proposed to keep on the defensive and send Andelot to Germany for troops.

"I object," said Coligny. "This is a purely French quarrel, and let Frenchmen settle it." He had great confidence in the Huguenots.

"We must fight the enemy with his own weapons," said the prince. "The three tyrants who hold the queen have

* De Thou fills pages with the massacres at Amiens, Senlis, Cahors, Caen, Meaux, Troyes, Mons, Nevers, Angers, Blois, Tours, Rouen, Poitiers, Toulouse, Angoulême, Auxerre, etc. See some contemporaneous pamphlets in Mém. de Condé.

sent abroad to Spain, to Rome, to Holland and to the Turks, for aught we know, for legions of soldiers."

"Then I yield to a military necessity," said Coligny. Within the course of the summer Maligny went to England. Queen Elizabeth was asked for aid. She offered to grant it on condition that Calais should be restored to her; a price too great for Frenchmen to pay. Her own secret agent, Throgmorton, wrote to her, "Howsoever things fall out, it standeth your majesty, for your own safety and reputation, to be well ware that the Prince of Condé and his followers be not in this realm overthrown." She must do more than sympathize and mediate. If Elizabeth stood by while the Triumvirs cut the throats of the Huguenots, her own turn would come next. Still more urgently was the subject pressed upon the cool, calculating, half-Protestant queen. At home Cecil was sketching the "Perils if the Prince of Condé be overthrown. Philip of Spain and the Guises would become the dictators of Europe; Spain would have Ireland (and Scotland too); the council of Trent would pass a sweeping sentence against all Protestants, and the English Catholics would rise in universal rebellion." All gloomy enough, certainly, but yet Elizabeth was slow to act. She must have Havre and Calais* as her reward. She finally sent some men and money, but throughout the whole contest proved very sparing in her supplies to her Protestant friends.

Andelot went beyond the Rhine, and in August wrote to Calvin, saying, "Thank God, I have found so much favour

* In the treaty of Cateau-Cambray, the French promised, in certain events, to restore Calais in 1557. It was a sort of peace-morsel tossed to all parties. In case of a war between Romanists and Protestants in England, Elizabeth might unite them by crying, "Let us win Calais." But could she unite the warring French now by demanding Calais five years too soon? See Froude; Burnet.

among the princes [especially Philip of Hesse] that I hope to lead back three thousand horse and as many lancers. It was a long time before I brought them to favour my views at all, and I had almost begun to despair. I trust that our gracious God still wills to make use of human means to aid his Church." Far and wide rang the appeals of Calvin, who now thought that if there must be a war, it should be a good one. "I have feared lest I should have to retract what I had written," was his word to Bullinger. "Strain every nerve to procure troops from Berne, for if the war be protracted any longer, we are completely ruined, as well as the kingdom. Would they [the Huguenots] had never left home! . . . One company has deserted to our side; others have promised not to fight us. The French cavalry is favourable to us, and that makes the Guises very uneasy."*

The veteran, Montmorency, had acted as a child which vents its petulance upon toys and chairs by which the little foot has been aggrieved. As soon as the captured queen had been led back to Paris, he rushed out to "Jerusalem," laid hands on two Huguenot temples, ripped up the benches, smashed the pulpits, pulled down the buildings, brought some of the timbers into the city, made a bonfire and shouted, "God has not yet forsaken Paris." The Huguenots, in their songs and pasquinades, gave him the title of *Monsieur Brule-banc*—Burnbench. His lawless example carried his admirers still farther. They ferreted out the lingering worshippers and revelled in plunder, rioting and slaughter. "God knows how many porters and rag-gatherers were made rich and Huguenots poor," says Claude Haton,† who reckons that more than eight hundred heretics were killed in Paris during the June of 1562.

* Letter dcxxxii., 15th August, 1562.

† His chronicle is found in Documents sur l'Histoire de France.

The enriching of one class at the expense of another became general in France. Brantome relates: "I heard two good Catholics say that this good civil war brought to light an infinity of treasures hidden in churches. . . . Many gentlemen had a vast amount of money, all coined with the effigy of our little King Charles upon it. I have seen those who had been greatly reduced riding about with half a dozen good horses, jolly enough. If they caught bankers, they made the crowns fly out of their purses; and thus the nobility were restored to wealth by the grace of this good war, so well invented by the great admiral." The abbe mistook the inventor.

Coligny wrote to his violent uncle, whom he "had honoured and served as a father." The letter is full of heart and history, as a quotation may prove. The messenger bore proposals for securing peace:

"My lord, I entreat you to consider the troubles of this kingdom, and the calamities which must fall upon it unless God put forth his hand. And I appeal to all just men to declare who are the real cause. For yourself, I beg you to consider in whose hands you are, and whether your allies be not the very men who have ever sworn and sought your ruin and that of your whole house. I appeal to your experience when in prison [after St. Quentin] and throughout the late king's reign. The most able men may be deceived, but to persist in known error is contemptible.

"I entreat you to consider whether the enmity of those persons to my brothers and myself be not chiefly on your account. At the beginning of the reign of Henry II. how well we were altogether! It was your injuries and your discontent against them that divided us. I know not, sir, whether you are the last one to perceive that you will be held responsible for the coming evils, and that you are about to bequeath to your house, as a lasting inheritance,

the detestation of all classes, and more especially of the nobility of this country; and this only that you may aggrandize enemies whose greatness will be founded on your own destruction. . . . All this company here assembled have fully resolved, that as they do not wish to give law to the Romish Church, neither will they receive law from her. . . . God will finally judge our intentions, and before him I protest that not one of all this company has taken arms either against our king or against the Roman Church, but solely to maintain the crown and to defend those of our religion from the violence which has been committed in defiance of the throne and the national assembly of this kingdom."

The proposals which Coligny and the prince had transmitted were very moderate, and to this effect: That the edict of January should be observed by all parties; that all persons should be compensated for injuries received during the latest troubles; that the free agency of the king and queen-mother should be ensured; that she should separate herself from the Triumvirate, take her son and remove to some place halfway between Paris and Orleans; that there the chiefs of both parties should meet her and give an account of their conduct; or, if she should remain in Paris, that Guise and his party should lay down their arms and return to their estates, while the same thing would be done by Condé and his followers, although, as a prince of the blood, he was exempt from such an obligation; and that he would give up all his children into the hands of the queen as pledges of his sincerity.

Well might the prince add, that if these proposals were rejected the whole blame of the civil war would rest upon his adversaries. The Triumvirate issued a paper, in which they unblushingly stated that the young king and his mother had come to Paris by their own consent, and were

at perfect liberty! We need not take up other points, which were as false as they were fair. The proposals were of course rejected with attempted disdain.

Both parties took the field. The Duke of Guise led his forces of seven thousand men toward Orleans. No sooner was this movement known than the prince and the admiral marched out with their eight thousand men to meet them. The little town of Vassodun bade fair to become a scene of war. Nothing was talked of but a battle. The queen was in distress. She proposed a conference with the Prince. They agreed to meet at Thoury, with a hundred gentlemen on each side, who should keep at a wide distance apart. The hour came. The queen and Navarre met the prince and Coligny. While they were talking, the chiefs of both parties "yearned toward each other." They gazed for half an hour, "one seeking with his eyes a brother, another an uncle, a cousin, a friend, an ancient companion. They asked leave to approach. Leave was granted with reluctance, for it was feared they would fall to blows. But far were they from such feelings. There was nothing but salutations and embracings, in spite of the colours each party bore—the troops of Navarre being clothed in cassocks of crimson velvet, with crimson banners, and those of Condé in white, with white banners. . . . When all at last began to think that, if their chiefs should not agree, these greetings would soon be converted into bloody murders, when brother would not spare brother, the tears sprang to their eyes. Myself was then among the Protestants"—we are quoting from the literary captain, La Noue—"and I may truly say that on the other side I had a dozen friends whom I accounted as dear as my own brethren, and who bore me the like affection. Private friendships were warm then, but have since been deadened by the miseries that followed. . . . The queen and the prince, having conferred about two

hours, parted without coming to any agreement; and all the rest retired, extremely sorrowful that there had been no better result."

A strange expedient had entered the mind of Catherine, for which she was partly indebted to Bishop Montluc, her private councillor. It was to persuade the chiefs of each party to impose on themselves a voluntary exile. The Triumvirs were to leave the court; the prince and the Colignys were to take refuge in some other kingdom, until the majority of Charles IX. The idea was a stratagem of the court. Condé seemed willing to accept the proposal. "He returned to the camp," says La Noue, whose pen ran humorously years after in his prison, "and he laughed (between his teeth) with the gentlemen who had heard all his talk. Some scratched their heads where there was no itching, some were pensive, but the younger sort gibed at each other, wondering how they should earn a living in a foreign land." Coligny only saw a "rat-trap" in the proposal. "If you now forsake us, it will be rumoured that you are in fear," said Andelot. The brave lord of Broncarde, whose head was like a loaded musket, had his word: "I should be loth to walk up and down in a foreign land with a toothpick in my mouth (a glance at the admiral), and know that some flattering neighbour was master of my house and fattening on my revenues." Beza urged the prince: "Do not give over the good work you have begun, and God will bring it to perfection." Condé yielded, and "all shook hands in confirmation thereof."

Another conference was held at Talcy (28th June, 1562), but the Huguenots were only wasting time by these parleys. Andelot said of them: "All these parlementations are nothing but swindling baits, and we shall never be agreed till we are brought within half a league of each other and have had a good scrimmage together." Each army was

wary of the other, avoiding a general engagement. Each sent out bands of men to seize what towns and treasures they could. Blois fell to the Duke of Guise, who outdid the cruelties at Vassy.

The good people of Beaugency had pleasant memories of John Calvin, who used to leave his books behind him and walk out from Orleans to teach the glad tidings of life to those whose first astonishment equalled their later faith. It became a Protestant town. No doubt they were willing to quarter the Prince of Condé and his body-guard among them while he still carried on these parleys. He was there at Catherine's suggestion, as the bridge over the Loire would be a good spot for a conference. He took no hostages of Navarre, for he relied upon the mere word of a brother and of Catherine. He sent away the Protestant garrison. But soon he found himself in a trap. The queen shut him up in the place, set her garrison over it and put it in a state of defence against the admiral.

Coligny was so indignant at this perfidy that he marched suddenly upon the enemy's camp and rescued Condé, for the queen was now in haste to give him up unharmed. A fight exposed the village to the plunder of the admiral's troops. They broke over all restraints and put their commanders to shame.*

The admiral had now his headquarters at Bourges. One day he learned that a battering-train, with a quantity of gunpowder, was on its way to the Duke of Guise, under command of De Chon, a Lorrainer and no bad soldier. "What! six troops of cavalry and an array of infantry!" said Coligny. "They must want to be sure of their powder, or intend to attack us. We will see to that." He marched out with his cavalry. Coming near, De Chon challenged him to a single combat.

* Vita Colinii; Courtiltz, Vie de Coligny.

"I have a greater war on hand than a duel," replied Coligny. "You can have fight enough, if you desire." His soldiers made a brisk charge, routed the powder train, and heard the leader crying out to his men, "Ah, cowards! is this what you promised me?"

Two horsemen then quitted their ranks and approached the admiral, who ordered them to be taken alive, if possible. They fought desperately. One slew two or three of the other party and then fell dead; the other was captured. "Why did your captain insult me by his challenge?" inquired the admiral.

He refused to explain at first, but finally said, "I and my friend were offered a large reward if we should kill Coligny at the time of the duel. De Chon promised it, giving us each a proof-cuirass and good arms."

"Your slain comrade has his reward for such an outrage upon honourable warfare. Be wiser by his fate. Go free, and tell your master that we are not highwaymen." Coligny then piled in one heap the captured guns, gunpowder, carriages and useless spoil, and when he applied the match, "his soldiers were much astonished at the noise!"* The spiking of guns was not then understood.

During some of the struggles near Beaugency, Admiral Coligny bore a heavy grief upon his heart. God had given him several children; he loved Gaspard, his oldest, as his own soul. This son had studied under a renowned master and given promise of distinction. His father hoped to see him become eminent in military life. We recall the haste with which the admiral went from Chatillon to Orleans. His wife and children soon followed, and this son fell sick of a fever,† when the admiral was taking the active march.

* Vita Colinii; Courtilz, Browning.

† Perhaps the plague, which young D'Aubigné had about the same time. Thousands of poor refugees died with it. Beza says ten thou-

For seven days his mother watched over him, unwilling to give him up; but "the Lord took him." As usual, the admiral sought to lessen his wife's sorrow by concealing his own. His chaplain, Merlin, thought the admiral ought to show more sympathy, and visited him in camp. Coligny sent back the following letter, which reveals the sources of his strength:

"That you may have reason to support yourself under the grief for our beloved son, remember that he belonged to God more than to us. Fall back upon that faith which can give you submission to his holy will. It is true that he deserved to be loved by us, and that we hoped for great satisfaction from one so well born and so promising. But remember, my beloved Charlotte, that he could not live longer without displeasing God. It was better for him to die at his age, so that he might be free from all future sin. Finally, God teaches that we should offer to him all our other children, so that if it be his will he may make them more blessed than we can do. Adieu. I hope that you can share with me in my joy as I do in your sorrow. Written from camp." * In her piety, Madame Coligny derived fresh comfort from the will of God.

A more public woe fell upon all Protestant France. The bloodiest annals of legislation may be challenged to produce a more inhuman decree than was issued by the parliament of Paris. The hands of the pope, of Philip† and of

sand persons perished, but very few of them were soldiers. A general fast was ordered by the Protestant ministers; the plague ceased. Paris also was visited, but the statement that eighty thousand died there in the summer of 1562 seems exaggerated.

* Vita Colinii.

† Pius V. ordered collections to be raised. Throgmorton wrote: "The pope hath lent one hundred thousand crowns, and doth pay besides six thousand soldiers." Philip promised military support. The

the Trumvirs were in it. By one stroke of the pen the entire Huguenot population was proscribed, and all Romanists commanded to arm in every parish, and at the sound of the bell or the drum to rise and slay their neighbours without mercy, without respect to age or ties of family and without fear of being called to any account.* Each of the three tyrants was a Haman, using the king's signet ring, and she whom Coligny had twice called the Esther of the Protestants was either heartless or powerless.

Then might be heard from Roman Catholic pulpits on every Sabbath day the murderous decree read by the pastor to his congregation, which *commanded* them to massacre and pillage their innocent brethren and acquaintances. Then might be heard the clang of the rural village bell, summoning those who had ever stood in horror of shedding human blood in their quiet streets, to slaughter the companions of their toil, their fellow-shepherds on the hills and

French ambassador at Madrid wrote (1st May, 1562): "They devise how the Guiseans may be assisted, whose cause is as dear to them as their eyeballs." All for destroying the French heretics!

* Twenty years before, the inquisitor Caraffa had this among the "best rules that he could devise" for exterminating heresy: "No man must debase himself by showing toleration toward heretics of any kind, above all toward Calvinists."—*Ranke, Hist. Popes, Bohn's ed.*, i. 159.

If such rules were fully abandoned in our age, we should treat them as matters of "the dead past." But at Rome itself certain Protestants were recently excluded from the city limits, and barely allowed to worship outside the city gates. Among other defences of the action was the following, in the *New York Tablet*, 1867: "As Protestants have no divine authority to teach or govern, they have no right to send missionaries or to open places of worship where the national authority forbids it. They have from God no right of propagandism, and religious liberty is in no sense violated when the national authority, whether Catholic or pagan, closes their mouths and their places of holding forth."

fellow-worshippers in the church. Then might be seen the peasant leaving his corn and his vines and rushing with the bludgeon into his neighbours' fields, and repeating the crime of Cain upon Abel. Then the Huguenot mother shut the doors of her house, gathered her children about her and prayed to God that he would send deliverance. Her very cries to Jehovah are a proof that she is worthy of death. At sunset a smoking brand is all that is left of that house, and human ashes are mingled with the native soil. A brutal herdsman gathers his band, wanders through the valleys and mountains and deals with overtaken fugitives as the enemies of God, the country and the Church. We could cite facts, for the names of towns and of men are recorded, but even general statements are too horrible for history. Even the poet, Ronsard, whose elegant verses had charmed the leisure of Mary Stuart and won the laurel wreath from scholars, headed a mob and executed the barbarous decree. The Romanist, Castelnau, tells us that "fifty thousand persons are said to have perished in these disorders." The monks called this "*letting slip the big grayhound!*"

Nor was this the whole of the proposed tragedy. The trio induced parliament, "with much vivacity," to brand as rebels and traitors all Protestants who sack towns, pillage churches and continue the war, excepting only the Prince of Condé, whom they hoped to lure by this special favour. Condé heard of it, and doubted whether his name was an exception. To his inquiries they replied in hard and haughty terms. "This article," said he, "merits another sort of a response than that of the pen; and I hope in a few days to go with the sword in my hand and find out whether it is proper for a foreigner and his two companions to declare a sentence against a prince of the blood and the greater part of the first nobility of this realm."

"It is ever to be remembered," says Agrippa D'Aubigné, "that so long as the Reformed were put to death under form of justice, however iniquitous and cruel it might be, they held out their necks and had no hands for resistance. But when the magistrates, wearied of burnings, flung the knife into the hands of the people, and the tumults and enormous massacres of France tore away the venerable aspect of justice, and made neighbour to slaughter neighbour at the sound of trumpet and drum, who could forbid the wretches to oppose arms to arms, steel to steel, and catch from an unjust fury the contagion of a righteous rage? . . . Let foreign nations judge which of the two parties has its forehead stained with the crime of war." *

Could an army be restrained from violence when such inhuman decrees rested upon the home and family of every Huguenot soldier? "When this war began," says La Noue, "the chiefs and captains in the Huguenot army still remembered the fine military order of the days of Francis and Henry. The soldiers, too, had a memory of it, which kept them to their duty; and still more power had the constant preachings and remonstrances of their ministers, who exhorted them not to oppress the poor people. The zeal of religion was strong among them then. Marching through

* Histoire Universelle. The author of this valuable chronicle was a student in Paris at the time of which we write. The Triumvirs ordered all Protestants to leave the city, and, with his teacher Beralde and his family, he fled to Milly. There they were seized, flung into prison and given up to the inquisitor. Young D'Aubigné was unmoved until his little sword was taken from him. Then he wept, but would not deny his faith. When told that he might be released if he would abjure, he said, "I have more horror of the mass than of death." He paid the keeper of the prison large moneys, and escaped with his company to Orleans, where he joined his father, a commander in the Huguenot army. He was then sixteen years of age. He almost died of the plague.

the country, they neither pillaged nor ill-treated their hosts, contenting themselves with little, and those who had the means paying honestly. If a man committed a crime, nobody would plead for him, so great was their detestation of wickedness.

"Many were astonished at this fine order, and I remember my brother, Teligny, and myself, discoursing with the admiral, praised it highly. 'It is a fine thing,' said he, "provided it lasts, but I fear this people will soon tire of their virtue.' Even so early as the taking of Beaugency a decline of discipline was perceptible. . . . There was born Mademoiselle de la Picoree (pillage), who has since risen to such dignity. She is now madame, and, if things continue, she will soon become princess. . . . The admiral spared no pains to remedy it, and none need expect to escape by frivolous excuses, for they were worth nothing to him." Still, the contrast between the two armies was remarkable. Every sort of outrage was a part of warfare among the soldiers of the trio.

There was enough to arouse the vengeance of a people as humane or as human as the Huguenots. But their wrath struck upon church buildings, monasteries, images and things lifeless before it fell upon men. It aimed at the objects of a false devotion and not the devotee. And yet they have been called the Vandals of the Church, the destroyers of art, the enemies of the beautiful and the ancient. We may regret that fine windows were broken, statues demolished, pictures cut with the sword, crypts ransacked, sacred furniture despoiled, leaden roofs run into cannon balls, and cathedrals of four hundred years riddled in an hour. But let those who make so much ado and weep over it all remember that there were living monuments more precious than those which fell at the hammer's stroke; and who first struck at them? Who first shattered those tabernacles in which

dwelt human souls? Who first smote to the dust those temples of God? Weep over the broken marble! Yet those mute stones could be replaced. But who could give back to France those once living statues, after they were mutilated and cast in their blood to the earth? One was the work of man, and at this the indignant Huguenot aimed when he sought revenge. The other was the work of God, and who first were the destroyers of his art, his building and the crowning glory of his hand, having upon it the age of more than five thousand years? And whose was the greater sin? The charge that Protestantism destroyed art is false; but if this be the most serious charge made by æsthetics, it may be patiently borne.*

And yet we can afford to be honest. The day came when there were some sad instances of Huguenot retaliation. The worst may now suffice. In the South of France appeared Beaumont, Baron des Adrets. Never a true Huguenot, rather a furious malcontent, he drew the sword in the name of Condé, swept over the country and threw the pope into alarm lest this Attila should dash down upon Rome. He sought to injure the Romanists as much as the fiery Montluc injured the Protestants. As soon as his cruel character was known he was severely rebuked by Coligny and Calvin. He is wrongly entitled a "Calvinist chief;" no such man could be fighting for conscience, for religion and for God.

The Huguenot town of Orange was assailed by some Romanists, who fell upon the inhabitants like wolves from the barren Pyrenees. They hacked these poor people in pieces, burnt them at dull fires, left them to slowly die of mutilations, treated young women so that death was welcome to them, stripped noble ladies and pasted on them the torn leaves of their Geneva Bibles, and revelled in lust as

* Puaux; Prescott's Miscellaneous Essays.

if they were demons. A detachment of these wretches, fresh from the scene, were surprised by Des Adrets. In a fort they might have defended themselves, but villains are cowardly, and he made short work of them, hurling them over the rocks, tearing, torturing and slaying with a terrible revenge. Here was some show of retaliation.

But this man, warring in his own way, went to Montbrisson. It surrendered without a blow, and he had cause to be merciful. But a plank was run out from the castle walls, and man by man the garrison were told to walk out upon it and off it. That or worse, and the horrible scene began. He sat below; down came one soldier, another upon him, and a third, and the ghastly heap increased, while he "shouted to the victims to make haste as they shivered at the hideous leap." One lingered, turned back, came a second time and halted. "What!" exclaimed the baron, "do you take twice for it?"

"I will give you ten times to do it in!" was the instant reply. It won him his pardon.

The cruelties of this man were paraded in Roman Catholic camps and pulpits—only praise, however, being given to his rival Montluc. Yet who was Des Adrets? Some have said that he was but the tool of the crafty Catherine. Let Romanists be the witnesses of his character and motives. They were not Protestant. Maimbourg says that he blindly threw himself into the Huguenot party to revenge himself on the Duke of Guise and destroy Guise's authority in the south, and that the queen encouraged him. The Abbé Caveyrac says that "he returned sincerely to God and his king." He had never been a true Protestant. Had he been a sort of military Jesuit, acting a part that would throw confusion into all parties and help Catherine to power? We doubt whether the queen endorsed him. Certainly Coligny did not. He was soon removed and

the excellent Soubise put in his office as governor of Lyons, and this before his "sincere return" to the Roman Church.*

* Thuani Hist.; Bayle; D'Aubigné, Hist. Universelle; Maimbourg, Hist. du Calvinisme.

CHAPTER XII.

THROUGH WAR TO PEACE.

(1562–1563.)

THE contagious example of Montmorency had brought anarchy even into Paris. Catherine and the king were under a strong guard at the castle of Vincennes, for they dared not "to commit themselves into the hands of the furious Parisians, who did most cruelly use and kill every person, no age or sex excepted, that they took to be contrary to their religion." Thus wrote the English ambassador, Throgmorton, who was obnoxious to all parties except the Huguenots. Before he should give place to another, he set out for the camp of Guise at Blois, attaching himself to a convoy of artillery and powder. Was it the one under De Chon? Its fate was similar, for Coligny seized it, and led Throgmorton to Orleans.

There they talked of Queen Elizabeth, her needed aid, her settled price. "If Guise gets the upper hand of you," said the Englishman, "then we shall all be ruined by Spain and the pope. Give back Calais to Elizabeth; let her soldiers hold Havre as a pledge, and she will loan you a hundred thousand crowns, and spend forty thousand more on the defence of Rouen."

"Can we introduce the English into Normandy or surrender Calais without the appearance of treason?" inquired the admiral. "It will be a great note of infamy," said Condé. "Your queen asks too much. She is interested in her own defence, and should be willing to serve us a

good turn as well as herself." But Elizabeth drove hard bargains. She must have Calais, "and Havre too," said her agent; "it would be cheap even at a million of crowns." Some sort of an agreement was made. An English army took Havre;* other troops set out for Rouen.

Guise sought to prevent it, but seeing it was too late, he offered Condé the edict of January and universal toleration. "Will parliament put the seal to your promise?" asked the prince and the admiral. Of course not. One thing was gained; the Triumvirate must now fight the English.

Already was the siege of Rouen in progress. On the last of September, Guise sat down before it in force; the queen-mother, the boy-king, Navarre, Montmorency and St. André all present. Within the gates was the valiant Scot, Montgomery, and a small garrison. In the town all was sober and severe; no games, no shows, only sermons, prayers, psalms, faith in God, hope against hope, and a heroism that sent frail women to work on the walls. Five weeks were wearing away, when some boats were bringing up the river a force of English privateers, under such bold men as Wyatt the insurgent and "Strangways the rover." The boats were attacked; one ran upon the sands. The crews were seized and taken into the camp of Guise, who hanged them on trees with this writing above their heads:

* The rules laid down for the English soldiers, while holding Havre, might be supposed to have come from Admiral Coligny, they were so like his own: "Every captain and soldier, immediately after their arrival in the church or market-place, shall devoutly together yield thanks to God, by singing of some psalm or other devout prayer that shall be appointed, for their good passage and safe arrival. . . . Every soldier shall behave himself toward the French in all loving, courteous and gentle manner." . . . No thefts—no cards—no profane swearing. . . . "No soldier shall keep any woman other than his wedded wife."—*Vide Froude, Hist. England*, vii. 436.

"Hung for having come against the will of the queen of England to the service of the Huguenots." The rest cut their way into Rouen, and better fulfilled the will of Elizabeth.*

"We must conquer before Andelot comes with his Germans," said Guise. A furious assault was made. The walls gave way. Montgomery barely escaped. No mercy was shown to the inhabitants. The pillage lasted eight days, Brantome says, "without regard to one religion or the other." Then came judicial murders by the parliament. Among other victims was Augustin Marlorat, one of the twelve ministers whom we saw at Poissy. He was a man of learning, piety and moderation, highly esteemed among the faithful. The Constable Montmorency wished to see him, and at the interview accused him of having seduced the people. "If I have done so," replied the devoted minister of Christ, "God first seduced me, for I have preached to them the simple word of God." The constable insulted him on the way to the gibbet, where he exhorted his fellow-sufferers to glorify God to their last breath. He was hanged in front of the cathedral, whose splendour may cause the traveller to forget the sacrifice there made for true liberty of conscience.

The story of Francis de Civille might be told for the hundredth time and still retain its freshness. He was a private gentleman, who came to defend the city. Bravely holding his place in the front rank of his company, he was wounded in the neck by a musket-ball; he fell back into the trench, gave no signs of life, and was loosely covered with earth. The rude burial happened about midday. At nightfall his servant came to recover the body and send it to his family. But he found two bodies in the trench, and not being able to tell which was that of his master, he replaced

* Mezeray; De Thou.

them in their graves. On turning away, he noticed an arm still uncovered, and stooped to give it protection. In the moonlight his eye caught the glimmer of his master's diamond ring, and, overjoyed at this first discovery, he drew the body from its place. He found warmth remaining, and took it to the surgeons. They were burdened with labour, and declined to treat so desperate a case. Four days passed. The servant proved that life was not gone. The surgeons kindly attended to him. He began to recover. Just then the city was taken, and the rude soldiers dragged him from his couch and threw him out of the window. There he lay for three days without any attention, until an old friend discovered him almost lifeless. He was nursed with gentleness, and carried from Rouen in a boat. "I saw him," says D'Aubigné, "forty-two years afterward, as a delegate for Normandy in the General Assembly (of the Reformed Church). I observed that he always added to his signature, 'Thrice dead, thrice buried, and thrice raised, by the grace of God.' The ministers, for what reason it would be hard to divine, endeavoured in vain to make him give up this addition to his name."

The fate of the King of Navarre was less happy. Wounded and in agony, he was carried from the trenches to play the fool with his mistress, and disgust his visitors with his perpetual theme, the orange groves and golden rivers of his promised Sardinia. In a few days the wound was shown to be mortal. His levity ceased; he gave his whole mind to repentance. He warned Catherine of the evil intentions of Spain and the Triumvirate. She commended to him the Holy Scriptures. The ruling passion strong in death, he wavered again between the two great creeds. To his Papal physician and to the priest he was a devout Romanist. To the Protestant physician, sent him by Condé, he seemed a penitent Lutheran. He declared that if he recovered

he would openly profess the Augsburg Confession, and sent word to his brother that he would labour to promote the Reform. No one had any confidence in his words. He had trifled away the most splendid opportunities and betrayed the heaviest trusts. At the age of forty-four he died, worthy of the sentence of Pasquier, "regretted neither by one party nor the other."*

There are solemn lessons in the career of such a man. We see how worthless fair talents may be without principles —how ruinous, indeed, to himself and the cause he may advocate. Antony Bourbon had once gained honours in battle. Courage in some way may dazzle the eyes of men, but God looks for a conscience well directed by his holy Word. The end of this prince, deluded and deluding others, was loudly proclaiming to the Huguenots, "Put not your confidence in princes." "Trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. For he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city he layeth it low; he layeth it low, even to the ground; he bringeth it even to the dust."

The Prince of Condé now claimed that he ought to be made lieutenant-general as the successor of his deceased brother. But if he was tempted to betray his party for the sake of the high office, Coligny was at hand to give him nerve and keep before his mind the cause of God in which they were enlisted. They fell back to Orleans. Their defeat at Rouen threw a chill upon the Huguenots, whose brilliant successes had fired their ardour. On all sides they beheld a series of reverses. The successes were in the North, too far away to strengthen the main army. Numerous towns were lost. Even at headquarters an evil spirit was at work. Many Huguenot gentlemen and soldiers deserted to the king's camp, where they were well received

* Thuanus, Brantome, Castelnau.

and given letters of pardon. In olden times, David, probably, saw some such politicians go over to Saul.

One day an almost breathless messenger came to Orleans with a letter in cypher. The prince read it, and said to Coligny, "Your prayer is answered. Andelot has crossed the Rhine with four thousand reiters and lancers, swept across Lorraine, evaded the roving bands that sought to waylay him, and is within a few days' march of us. Now let us move upon Paris." Just up in the little town of Pluvières a few regiments were avenging some of the Rouen calamities, hanging some priests, and saying to the Papists, "As you brew, you must drink."

Into this town Andelot was borne in a litter, sick with the quartan ague. The rough German riders were hailed with cheers and given a month's pay in advance, the money, says La Noue, "being picked up here and there, for it is the usual malady of the Huguenots to be always short of funds." The chronic malady of the reiters was to be always eager for pay and plunder. Estampes was taken, then Corbeil. "We will cause a little trouble in the kitchen where the war was cooked," said La Noue; "the Parisians shall have a taste of their own dinner." Condé was intent upon seizing the capital, which was thrown into alarm. He may not have known that Guise and his army were fast marching down from Normandy, which he had almost laid waste.

"I object," answered Coligny; "our infantry will become mad for plunder, and when scattered through the suburbs, will be easily cut to pieces by the enemy." He also refused his assent to the pillage of Corbeil, and when reproached for his fears of such a paltry town, he replied, "I would rather be laughed at by my friends without reason than by my enemies with reason." He agreed with his wise La Noue, that the "best defences of a place are brave men within the walls."

Yet the army pushed on toward Paris. Catherine was in distress. She sent her ambassadors. She offered to make Condé lieutenant-general, to grant toleration—the great edict of January came up again—and the admiral too should have his reward. But her net was spread in vain. Already the advance was sweeping down upon the capital, when sixteen thousand men rushed to the walls for its defence. Certain suburbs were taken.* The citizens were in great terror. The president, Le Maistre, who had forced so many cruel edicts through parliament, could not flee from his sick room, and died, partly of fright. "It is the hand of God," said the Huguenots. "He avenges the death of Du Bourg."

Coligny and Andelot were drawn into other parleys, which came to nothing. Eight days were lost, the opportunity talked away, the Guises strengthened by three thousand Spaniards, and the Huguenots weakened by discontent. To shiver in the winter, and think of not being at home on the coming Christmas, did not impart new courage to the soldiers. Genlis, who had visited Coligny at Chatillon when Charlotte Laval pleaded for her religion and her brethren, played the traitor and went over to the Triumvirate. The first day he was caressed, the second laughed at, and the third was so despised that he sought repentance. "We must strategize," said Coligny. "The traitor will reveal all our plans." We imagine him singing that night at the service in his tent, the forty-first Psalm of David:

Yea, now mine own familiar friend,
Who oft did eat my bread,
And had my trust, hath lifted up
His heel against my head.

* "The prince rested in the environs of Paris, the admiral at Arcuel, Prince Porcian at Gentilly, Genlis at Montrouge, the Germans at Cachan, and the infantry near Vaurigard."—*Mezeray*, tome x. 187.

"Condé true to his faith and false to France," says Froude, "fell back from Paris, closely followed by Guise, the constable and St. André, intending to retire to the coast of Normandy, where the English army would take the field with him." They struck tent at Dreux, amid the forests, where once the Druids worshipped,* and left their name behind. "Here they will fight us," said the prince.

"Not to-morrow," said the admiral. "That shrewd queen will cause them to dally. Expect more talk about liberty of conscience to Protestants."

Beza relates "two things that occurred, which seemed as if sent from God, as presages of what was approaching." The first was, that when the prince was fording a small stream, on the way to Dreux, an aged woman ran out from among the peasants gathered to see him go by, flung herself into the waters, laid hold of his boot, and said, "Go on, sir prince; you will suffer much, but God will be with you." Being pleased with her devotion, he replied, "My mother, pray to God for me."

The other was more striking, and reveals much of the spirit of the age. In the evening the prince took his bed just after his chaplain had read prayers to the company. The chaplain seems to have been Beza, to whom Condé said, "To-morrow, if I am not much mistaken, we shall have battle, whatever the admiral may think. I know one ought not to give faith to his dreams, yet I must tell you what I dreamed last night. I thought that I had engaged in three battles, and finally gained the victory, seeing my three enemies dead. But I myself was also mortally wounded. So, having laid their three corpses one upon another, I placed myself above them and yielded up my spirit." Beza adds, "Strange to say, the dream seemed to be confirmed by the

* Vita Colinii.

final result." Hundreds of such presentiments fail, and then they are not noticed.

Beza laments the fatal security of the Huguenots, which allowed the constable to occupy the villages, and he says, "God, wishing to discomfit them one by the other, and not to exterminate either army, seems to have deprived the great captains on both sides of common understanding." He also regrets that battle was forced on the Huguenots "before they had offered private or public prayers, or had time to put on their armour." *

Guise displayed his remarkable genius as a warrior. He learned that the Huguenots were camped amid trees and brushwood, which would be a great hindrance to the splendid cavalry of the admiral. On the night of the eighteenth of December he crossed the little Eure, and was ready to hail the dawn with all the thunders of his artillery. He heard mass, posted his men among the copsewood and hedges, with the river in his rear. From dawn until noon the armies gazed at each other in solemn stillness. Each man thought within himself that he had relatives and former comrades before him. Condé saw no retreat, no way to refuse battle. When the attack was begun by the constable, he was resisted "marvellously well" by his nephew, the admiral, at the head of the advance. For about five hours the slaughter raged. Coligny pushed hard upon his uncle, who had taught him the art of war, and who now imagined that a single charge would finish the whole business with the poor Huguenoterie. But Coligny bore upon him with four thousand horse of the old army of Italy. First a clash, then confusion, the Protestant cavalry wield-

* A little later Beza acted the hero, whatever may be said of his conduct as a minister of the gospel. "In the battle he stoutly harangued the soldiers, and took his place in the front ranks, as if he had been one of the standard-bearers."—*Calvin's Letters*, dcxxxvii.

ing their lances, horses falling, men yelling the breath out of them, and Coligny riding through and through their ranks, paying his price for liberty of conscience toward the God whom he served. He thus shattered the very centre of the opposing column.

His uncle had dared too much when he threw himself and his men into the only spot where a horse could freely gallop. Mingling oaths and prayers, as his habit was, the aged warrior cried aloud to his troops when their ranks were breaking. Beaten from his horse, he quickly sprang back into the saddle; the German horsemen gathered around him; a bullet shattered his jaw; when almost choking with blood, he gave up his sword, and the great constable of France was lead to the rear a prisoner.

Half such skill and valour on the part of the other Huguenot forces might have ended the war, given Condé the place over Guise at the throne, and won for the Protestants the toleration they sought. Coligny's men shouted, "Victory," and imagined the day was theirs. But as he fixed his eye on the reserved battalions under Guise and St. André, all ready to sweep down upon the ground which Montmorency had left vacant, he said, "We deceive ourselves; we shall soon see that great cloud bursting upon us." Onward came the reserves. The Germans, unwilling to lose the chance of rifling the pockets of the wounded and stripping the dead, gave a feeble front to the foe, and at the first stroke of the storm they turned and fled, without a shot or a cut of the sabre. In vain had Coligny said, "He who holds his troops together to the last carries the day."

Andelot had risen from his couch, walked forth in his gown, trembling with cold, ague and burning with hot fever, to arrest the sad fall of his German reiters, who proved "that for fifty years such cowards had never entered France." In vain was the rallying-cry of the sick

hero, now mounted upon his horse; these hirelings threw away their arms and were chased from the field.

"We have the old leader; the followers will soon be ours," thought the Prince of Condé soon after the capture of Montmorency. Again he was saying, "The gains of one hour will be lost the next," for he saw the tide turning, received wounds, had a horse shot under him, put his foot in the stirrup to mount another, when young Henry Montmorency came up with the word "Surrender!" The son was seeking reprisals for the capture of his father and for the death of a younger brother. Condé gave up his sword, and he too was a prisoner.

It was Coligny, supported by a brave nobility, who saved the Huguenot army from annihilation. Loudly had he cried to his men, "Think more of your religion than of your lives," and some of them had shouted back the words on Condé's standards, "It is sweet to die for Christ and our country." Thrice they charged; thrice they were resisted, like waves by the moveless rock. Their pikes were found to be bent, their swords twisted, their pistols choked, so hard had been the service of that desperate day. It was Coligny's old praying regiment, fighting in God's name. In one of the attacks St. André fell, and gave up his sword to Coligny. But a wretch who had been once defrauded by the prisoner rode up and shot him through the head, saying, "Die, traitor—die by the hand of one whom you have despoiled." The assassin fled, for he knew that Coligny would punish the crime.

The chief object now aimed at by the enemy was the life of Coligny. Many a venturous man had rushed forward to slay him or perish; he only perished. The hidden hand of Jehovah was upon the general who most of all feared him. One knight, dressed in Guise's armour, and riding his fine charger, called on Coligny to advance

and fight him. But such a challenge was in vain. He then dashed into the ranks and was killed. So closely did this man resemble Guise that it was reported he was dead.

"Night came at a happy hour for the Huguenots," says Mezeray; perhaps the hour was quite as happy for the other army. Each side admitted no defeat; each had lost about the same number of men; of thirty thousand, eight thousand lay dead on the field. Unwillingly, slowly, sadly, Coligny retired with his troops, his own obedient soldiers in good order and himself great in adversity. What were his prayers through all that night for the wounded and dying, as the white coats and red coats touched each other on the field of uncomforted death!

Coligny did not regard the Protestants as conquered. He wrote to the queen of England, "Our infantry has suffered a defeat without fighting, but our cavalry, which alone fought the battle, is undamaged, and wishes for nothing more ardently than to meet once more, without delay, the enemies of God and of the kingdom. These will deliberate whether to attack us, or to await an attack from our side."*

In Paris there were, at first, no rejoicings as of victors. The queen saw that her losses were great. One of the Triumvirs was slain, another was a prisoner, and now the third, the Duke of Guise, would reign unchecked and alone. In her heartless way she coolly said of the result, "Well, then, we must pray to God in French"—alluding to the popular language of the Protestant worship. "But what of it? It will be but a mass the less!" A little later the

* One story is that when his friends urged Guise to pursue Coligny, he replied, "I have a worse beast to fight than all the Huguenots put together." He meant Catherine. Coligny sent a report of the battle to Calvin, of which Letter dcxxxvii. is probably a summary. He seems to have written the account in Mém. de Condé.

court reckoned upon a victory, and the streets and churches were filled with joy and thanksgiving.

The Prince of Condé was led to the tent of the Duke of Guise. One would have thought they were most chivalrous cousins. They seemed to forget that they had challenged each other to duels and vented their wrath by swearing to take revenge on the first occasion. The prince was little seen, says the Abbe Brantome; "Guise forbade the many who called from seeing him, for people in affliction do not like visitations. . . . I had, however, interest enough to get in, and beheld him near the fire, making great demonstrations of grief." The two rivals and foes ate their supper together, and, "beds being scarce," they shared the same couch, the duke "sleeping as soundly as if nothing had happened," and the prince never closing his eyes. The story is not quite well enough founded to carry conviction to modern rivals, who may be in need of such an example.

"Of all the battles fought in France during the civil wars," wrote La Noue, who by turns used sword and pen in his peculiar way, "none is more memorable than that of Dreux, whether we consider the experienced chiefs then present, or the obstinacy with which the field was disputed. In every point of view it is an accident worthy of all lamentation, on account of the blood of more than five hundred gentlemen which bathed the bosom of their common mother." Among the slain was the aged La Brosse, who struck the first blow in the massacre of Vassy. Guise hoped to make him grand marshal of France. In the cold morning, before the battle, La Brosse said, "I fancy I shall be killed to-day, and, indeed, I have lived too long, and it is a shame for me to bear a lance and imbrue it in blood, when I should be at home begging of God to forgive the sins of my youth." Why not do that on the field? Perhaps he

thought a priest and a mass were necessary to the obtaining of a pardon, or he spoke only in the levity of his wit.

"If this battle had been lost," was one of the comments of the warrior Montluc, "I think it would have been all over with France. Both state and religion would have been changed, for they would have done what they willed with the young king."

In distant quarters there was a *Te Deum* for the result. The Cardinal of Lorraine was not at the Council of Trent, and Frao Paulo Sarpi tells that "the fathers thanked God for an event which was reported to them as a victory (although it did not merit the name), and they made a procession, chanted a mass and listened to a sermon from Beaucaire, who ascribed all the disorders in France to Luther, and all the successes of the last wars to the Duke of Guise." The journalist Verdun puts it a little differently: "There was a solemn procession for peace in the French kingdom, and for the extirpation of heresy therein," and the news from Dreux coming the same day, "they went to the great church, giving thanks to God in the chant *Te Deum*." * The whole Roman Church was doing its worst to defeat French Protestantism.

More touching is the account of the joy and sadness felt by Mary of Scots. Still warmly attached to her uncles, she rejoiced in the successes of Guise at Rouen and Dreux, but she was shocked with the furious character of the war. It was her grief to see the country so dear to her, the land of her childhood and happiest days, so flooded with the blood of her people, its towns stormed and razed, and its brave nobility clashing in mortal strife. She heard the tidings with tears, and begged for peace.†

What was the next political move of the Duke of Guise,

* Sarpi. Hist. Concil. de Trent.—*Pallavicino.*

† Tytler, Hist. Scot. vi. 275.

the only one of the Triumvirate left to manage the government? He at once wrote to the king of "the happy victory he had achieved over his rebel subjects," and humbly ordered him to send him papers in blank, that he might fill them up with the names of certain officers, especially that of a successor to St. André in the grand marshalship. If the king should refuse, "he would disgust certain most faithful servants, throw cold water on that courage which is ready to hazard life, and give men just cause to forsake him and find a party somewhere else!" What dictation!

The king read the letter, and remarked in his dawning wisdom, "See whether this Duke of Guise plays the king or not. You would swear the army were his own, and the victory due solely to his hand. No mention of God! and he tells me that if I do not grant his demand, he will quit my service and join my enemies!" The royal Charles gave the duke to understand that he had already given the baton of marshal to Vielleville, a moderate man, and would fill other vacancies at pleasure. But Guise was again made lieutenant-general, and he was as happy as Haman in the first hours of his promotion. The Mordecai was Coligny. An Esther was not to be found.

The Prince of Condé was lost for a time; the army was saved, and Coligny was thinking of strategies and of discipline. While Condé was nervous from his dream, he had named Coligny as his successor, and the Huguenots willingly elected the admiral as their chief during the prince's captivity. He said to Andelot, "You go to Orleans. Draw thither the Duke of Guise, and let him waste his time and means battering at the walls."

"But these Hessians!" said Andelot. "They are clamorous for their pay. What the churches are sending us will not satisfy them. They will desert to the enemy or run riot over the whole land."

"I will take the worst of them, and give them such a schooling as they never had, and that on a rapid march, over rough roads. I shall sweep up through Normandy, and at Havre get the money promised by Elizabeth, or drive her guards into the sea."

Elizabeth's conduct had been provoking. The admiral had lost Throgmorton at Dreux; Guise had him as a prisoner, and was saying to him very soothingly, "Let your queen withdraw her force from Havre, and Calais shall be given up to her." His reservation was, "I shall cheat her of that, or win it back." She heard her Commons "resolve to yield their whole power in goods and bodies to recover Calais." She did not trust Condé, and had but a half trust in Coligny. She wrote to her new ambassador, Smith, "You need not hint to the admiral that there is any slackness on my part; but I would be glad if some indirect means could be devised to settle the religious difficulties, even if toleration be not established so universally as the admiral desires; but England must have Calais, and the money loaned to Condé must be repaid."

Such was the hollow dealing of Elizabeth. Behind a noble cause she sought a private object. The result was, that "six thousand Englishmen paid with their lives for this trifling with Chatillon, while the coveted Calais was forfeited for ever. The Huguenots obtained the half toleration which she desired for them; and they found the value of it on the day of St. Bartholomew."*

But we anticipate. The fact was already overshadowing the mind of Coligny and causing fear. It was a brave thing to lead those obstreperous German raiders far off to Havre, and there demand aid from across the howling Channel.

The admiral began his march the first of February, and

* Froude, Hist. England, vii. 497.

in six days was fifty leagues distant. At Havre no men, no money were waiting. The Hessians, "ignorant of what quarter of the world they were in," looked toward England and growled in unison with the angry sea. They raved, they threatened, they almost mutinied. Coligny stood amid the wild tumult, powerful in his calmness. "See that!" said he, pointing to the wintry waves, as his plea for England's delay. They retired; they began to hold secret meetings; they decided to abandon his standards. By raiding across France they might get home with large spoils. Suddenly the winds began to cease, as if the Mighty One of Galilee were walking on the waves. A fleet was seen; Coligny thanked God for the timely appearance. English aid was never more opportune. The *reiters* cheered the admiral, and received from him a part of their pay.

Nor was this the only vision of the heavenly Hand. The Normans still remembered their advocate. Deputies arrived from Caen, a city second to Rouen in wealth, entreating him to take them under his protection. It was occupied by the Duke of Elbœuf, brother of Guise. His conduct made him the detestation of the citizens. But at this moment Coligny saw a frowning providence. He learned that the Duke of Guise was preparing to make a desperate assault upon Orleans. "I will draw away some of his troops by attacking Caen," said the admiral. He marched thither. The gates were opened to receive him. The city was full of the enemy's spoils. He again paid his Hessians, got other supplies and hastened toward Orleans. Between the two armies, "Normandy was well ravaged."

Meanwhile, the Duke of Guise had marched to Orleans and begun the siege, saying, "Once take the burrow where the foxes have retreated, and we will chase them all over France." Difficulties were pointed out to this hunter of

men. With his usual spirit of determination he replied, with an oath (for he was a great swearer), "Since the sun finds entrance into Orleans, I too will enter it." Vain boast! He forgot the God who was causing his sun to shine upon the beleaguered Huguenots in the middle of February. He wrote to the queen, "When I enter I will root out the entire seed of Huguenotism." *

Andelot was almost overcome. One gate was forced by Guise. An alarm ran through the city. Rising from his sick bed, trembling still with ague, Andelot cried out, "Let the nobility follow me. We must drive out the enemy or die. They can only advance ten men at once, but a hundred of ours may resist a thousand of theirs. Courage; *forward!*" Then ten men put a thousand to flight. Guise fell back, to fight no more.

A young man had come to Coligny, named Jean Poltrot de Méré, recommended by Soubise, and assuming to be in distress because the Guises were usurping all the power over France. He put on the face of a devout Huguenot. He said that if he were so fortunate as to be fighting against the Duke of Guise, he would single him out and try his courage against him. This seems to have been all that he then said to Coligny; perhaps he then had no intention to assassinate the chief enemy.† Coligny seems to have given him money to buy a horse, and allowed him to act as a spy. Poltrot then wrought himself into the good graces of the duke, pretended to be a new convert "to the old religion," dined with him, and, on the evening before the great assault was to be made, shot him with three balls in the

* "The duke will in no wise accord to peace till the Protestants be utterly exterminated."—*Throgmorton.*

† Had he boasted openly that he would assassinate Guise, it must have become known, for his confidant Brion acted the traitor and joined the duke after the assumed boast.

shoulder. "It was to be expected," said the duke; "but I think it will be nothing."

The duke lived a few days, denied that he had premeditated the massacre of Vassy, or else prayed that God would forgive all his faults "excepting the affair of Vassy," advised the queen to make peace, and probably alluded to Coligny when he said, "And thou, too, I forgive, who art the author of this;" if indeed he said any such thing.* He died greatly regretted by the extreme Roman party.

Poltrot was speedily arrested. . His only hope of escaping a horrible death was by fixing his crime upon others.† When before his judges at Paris, and tortured to wring from him just what was wanted, he accused Coligny, Beza, La Rochefoucauld, Soubise and two others of being his accomplices, but also claimed that he acted by a divine inspiration. He was a fanatic. This was too sweeping a charge to be plausible. He afterward varied his confessions, until Coligny was left to bear the full burden. Even in this he had no straightforward story. "I spoke to him myself," says Brantome, who was a warm friend of the Guises. "As to the admiral, he varied and contradicted himself very much in his examination when tortured, and at his death." Before the president, De Thou, he retracted the charges, but re-uttered them when dying a horrible death. And still his statements were published and sent abroad. All Europe was deeply interested in the case.

What if Poltrot had stoutly clung to one story and made it appear consistent with itself? Even then the charge would rest solely upon the word of an assassin. One who

* At most it could be a merely vague suspicion, unworthy of notice except as softening the temper of the duke.

† It was generally supposed at the time that Poltrot had been promised a pardon, if his instigator could be brought to justice.—*Perau, Vie de Coligny.*

had murdered another could readily lie about it, when he knew that the whole Papal party was anxious to fix the stigma upon the great leader of the Huguenots. The "circumstantial evidence" amounts to nothing against him, or if it have any force it lies harder against Catherine than Coligny. She is reported to have said to Tavannes, "The Guises wished to make themselves kings, but I took good care of them before Orleans." The suspicion is rejected, but she had an interest in getting rid of the duke. A murderer alone is the accuser. A man whose whole life proves the high tone of his principles is the accused. In history the two men confront each other, and as the word of each one is taken the verdict is rendered. Surely Coligny ought to be heard, inasmuch as the statements are yet running in the histories that "Chatillon never wholly convinced the world of his innocence, for Poltrot himself accused him while the horses were tearing him in pieces;" and that "Coligny assented, if he did not consent to the crime. He was not unwilling to profit by it, though he would do nothing to further it."*

Two days after Coligny had seen "an interrogatory made by one named Jean de Poltrot," he sent to Catherine an earnest letter, and a full response to all the points taken by the account.† Scarcely travelling out of his own record, we shall notice only a few particulars:

1. The demand for a hearing. Coligny asked for a safe-conduct, saying, "As the thing I should most dread in the world would be the execution of Poltrot before the truth is discovered, I humbly entreat your majesty that he shall be safely kept. . . . . Once more I humbly entreat that Poltrot may be well and carefully guarded to prove the truth,

* Froude, Hist. Eng. vii. p. 507; White. Mas. St. Barth. 228, London edition.

† Documents in Mém. de Condé.

whatever it may be. For if he be carried to Paris, I should fear that those of the parliament* would have him executed, and thus leave me to lie under this calumny and imposture." Innocence was not afraid of justice. If the court were anxious for the truth, or confident that Coligny could not overthrow Poltrot's contradictory statements, why not grant so reasonable a demand? Why hasten to put the accusing witness out of the way?

2. The connection with Poltrot. The assassin declared that he went to Orleans in July; Coligny affirms that he never saw or heard of him until the January following, and that Poltrot was engaged as a spy, or a messenger to Andelot. As to any intimacy, it was false. The pretended conferences were fabulous. The accuser betrayed his want of familiarity with Huguenot affairs by constantly using the term *Seigneur de Chatillon*, whereas the uniform title was *Monsieur l'Amiral.*

3. The warnings to the Guises. As to assassinations, "I have always prevented such enterprises by every means in my power. Hence I have often had communication with the Cardinal of Lorraine, Madame de Guise and your majesty, who may remember how strongly I have opposed them." Brantome asserts that "the admiral had sent word to Guise some days before to take care of himself, for there was a man hired to murder him." If this latter statement were true, who hired him? Certainly not Coligny, or he would not give the information. If he ever gave it, he was not an accomplice. It should be noted that

* A strong effort had been made by the Guises some months before to have Coligny condemned as a rebel. Calvin writes: "The councillors who refused to condemn the admiral and his brother Andelot have been thrown into prison." Letter dcxxxvi., 27 Dec., 1562. This desire to crush the Chatillons would lead them to make their own use of Poltrot.

assassination was not then held in such disgrace as it is now. It was a part of warfare among the Southern nations to repay violent deeds in kind. That Coligny ever acted on this bad principle is not proved, but we can see how a fanatic, hearing constantly of "the butcher of Vassy," might persuade himself to take the life of Guise. The soldiers might carelessly speak of such a deed without any malicious intentions.

4. Certain concessions of the admiral. He admitted that after the Vassy affair he heard some one say that he would kill the duke; and that when he last met Poltrot this mar talked about how easy it would be to kill him, but Coligny "looked upon it as mere idle talk"—(he ridiculed it, says De Serres)—"yet during the last five or six months, I have no longer contested the matter against those who have showed such a will,* and that because I had information that certain persons, whom I will name in fit time,† had been practiced upon to kill me, as your majesty may remember I told her. . . ." This admission was so honest that no accomplice would have made it. Beza says that many of the admiral's friends were not pleased, for his enemies might infer too much from it, but he replied that he wished to give the whole truth, so that if he were confronted nothing should be unconfessed to his disadvantage. He would be frank, whatever the consequences. He claims a neutrality in the matter charged, or admits that he was not active in preventing the destruction of one who sought his own life. But he knew of no definite plot, nor wilful assassin. He gave no assent, no permission; he simply did

* "J'ay esté contrariant à cela, reservé cinq ou six mois en ça, que je n'ay pas fort contesté contre ceux qui monstroient avoit telle volante."—*Admiral's Letter to Catherine.*

† The response shows that he means Guise and his brother the cardinal.

nothing in the case of a mere possibility. He did not expect such a crime. This concession of negativeness is the most that can be sustained against him. In an age more enlightened than his we must regret that he did not persevere in "hindering such enterprises by every means in his power." The very fact that he had "often opposed them" may have made him the more careless.

5. There is another admission, which no guilty man would be forward in avowing: "Do not imagine, however, that what I say proceeds from any regret occasioned by the death of Guise. I esteem it the greatest good that could have come to the kingdom, to the Church of God, and particularly to myself and all my house. If it so please your majesty, it shall prove the means of securing repose to this realm." If this was rejoicing over the death of the duke, Coligny was not alone in it. The Huguenots joined in thanksgiving. The excellent Cecil of England "was very glad of the duke's hurt, and could wish his soul in heaven." Even Catherine spoke freely: "The man is dead whom I hated most of all the world." Condé remarked that a great burden was removed, and she replied, "If the kingdom has been relieved of one burden, ten have been taken off my bosom."*

6. The positive denial of complicity: "I again declare that it will be found [if you allow me to confront Poltrot] that I never sought out this man, or any other to commit such an act. . . . I never solicited, or instigated any one to such a deed, either by word, money or promise." The

* The papists never lamented with more display. The pope ordered a splendid funeral ceremony. At Notre Dame, in Paris, a dignitary extolled the duke, saying that he would not pray for him, for it was an insult to a martyr to pray for his soul. He would reckon him among the saints, only out of respect for the pope who had not canonized him! We do not find that he has yet been canonized.

solemn word of such a man must weigh down the variable oath of an assassin. Castelnau says, "The admiral was always willing to purge himself, and he called it a villainous act." The Guises were pressing the charge to the very end of his life, but they never brought forward any new evidence. Coligny offered fresh papers; we shall again see the result.

Now the fact that Coligny was not granted a hearing in the very face of his accuser; the fact that Poltrot was not released upon his confession, and the fact that he was hurried out of the world in a most horrible manner, all tend to brand his statements as utterly false.* After his recantation of the charges before De Thou, he took them up again when tortured and questioned in his dying hour. And this might be expected of such a man when being torn with hot pincers and pulled limb from limb by four horses. As a witness, he was worthless; as an assassin, he endured the inhuman penalty of that age. The wife of M. de Thore Montmorency was one of the ladies at the execution, seeing the accuser of her husband's cousin die. So great was the horror that she died upon the spot.

The Abbé le Labourer says, "It is utterly false that the admiral, or any chief of that party, had any hand in that conspiracy" against the Duke of Guise. Lacratelle closes the case by saying, "If the previous life of the admiral be an answer to this terrible accusation, what he afterward did in two other civil wars still better repels the charge. How could a man, capable of such a crime, have so constantly abstained from the fury of vengeance and reprisals which appeared lawful?" The candid Abbé Millot says, "Nothing was less likely than this accusation, if we may judge from the character of those who were the objects of

* Browning, Hist. Huguenots, strongly argues the case for the admiral on the more circumstantial grounds.

it.* . . . . As hatred strengthens the most unjust prejudices, Henry of Guise, the eldest son of the duke, conceived from this moment the design of ruining Coligny." These are not Protestant opinions, nor is that of Voltaire, who exonerates the admiral. It was the shame of certain Huguenots to sing verses in praise of the assassin, as the Judith of his age, the "liberator of France." †

And yet France was, unquestionably, a freer land. Over court and cottage passed a breath of peace. Catherine was out of bondage, for the reign of the Triumvirs was ended. The royal army had no able commander. "I was obliged to command it myself," she said, "for Brissac was ill." French soldiers longed to get home. The people were suffering. Peasants had left their farms, fields were abandoned, villages desolate or in ashes and towns deserted. Agricul-

* He names Beza, who wrote to Calvin: "The tyrannicide on his trial and amid his tortures a hundred times declared me innocent of all participation in the murder."

† Calvin's opinion may be desired. The Duchess of Ferrara (Renée), wrote to him about her late son-in-law: "I know that he was a persecutor, but I do not know nor believe that he is reprobated of God, for he gave signs of a Christian man before his death." She complained that the ministers "blackened his memory." Calvin replied: "A good cause [that of relieving the persecuted] has been very ill-conducted. . . . For my own part, though I have often prayed God to show him mercy, yet it is certain that I have often desired that God should lay his hand on him [Guise], in order to deliver out of his hands the poor Church, unless it pleased God to convert him. So that I may protest that before the war, I had but to give my consent to have him exterminated by those men of prompt and ready execution, who were bent on that object, *and who were restrained by my exhortation.* To pronounce that he is damned, however, is to go too far, unless one had some certain and infallible mark of his reprobation. . . . . I bless God for having made known to you the real character of the admiral to inspire you with a taste for his probity. When it shall please him he will do the rest."—*Letters,* dclxiv.

ture had been given up by those who were "robbed to-day by one party, to-morrow by another;" commerce had ceased, and the mills stood idle. "No one was secure in property or life,"* says Castelnau. "Thus the war for religion destroyed both religion and piety."

As a specimen of the towns to which relief came by the death of Guise, we take Montargis. It had the advantage of Madame Renée's protection. Its inhabitants were famed of old for their rudeness toward citizens or luckless travellers. But the "Lady Resident" was doing something for their instruction, and they bowed low when the daughter of Louis XII. smiled upon her people. Her old, vast castle was ever open to refugees; more than three hundred Huguenots were sheltered and fed within its walls. Francis Morel was her chief minister. When the news of Vassy reached her, she ordered the gates of the town to be guarded, that neither Papist nor Huguenot might pass. But there was one Barreau, warden of the largest church, who put himself at the head of the seditious cliques, and they armed, fully resolved to rush forth at midnight and cut the throats of all Protestants on whom they could lay hands. They used the great church as their military quarters.

"The bailiff will punish severely all persons who hold meetings by day or by night," was madame's order. Yet, on the second evening after this nearly seven hundred rioters gathered, and, with "noise louder than the sound of tocsin," fell upon a poor blind innkeeper, almost killed his wife, and were soon at the house of Claude Chaperon, "an elder of the religion," who had not the grace to let them slay him. Madame sent to Orleans, not far distant, and

* The leader of one of the wild gangs called Barefeet shouted, "There are too many people in France; we will kill a lot of them and make bread cheap." De Serres puts such words into the mouth of the Duke of Guise.—*White.*

some of Condé's troopers quelled the mob, took their arms into the castle, hung three ringleaders and reduced all to good order. Montargis was the refuge for more of the persecuted, some of them Romanists. They came from Blois, Tours, Sens and Paris, sixty miles away.*

Condé's soldiers left madame to provide her own guard, and soon the raiders of Guise threw terror into the place. She was "marvellously anxious" for the safety of the poor Huguenots and their families, who might be exposed to the insults of merciless visitors. "I advise you to retire to the country," she said to her ministers, "until the storm is over." They started, and fell into the hands of "the Scotch guards," who said, "These must be good men; they don't swear like other people;" and then led them "to the haven where they would be." The castle was now the general resort. It was overflowing with poor men, women and children, and resembled a hospital. The Guises came to make it their headquarters, placing an army upon the town. Every Huguenot trembled, but madame threw her shield over all in her château. In the town the soldiers took their wild vengeance, tearing up the seats of the Protestant temple, destroying the pulpit and erecting their altars and images.†

* "You have been as a nursing-mother to those poor persecuted brethren who knew not where to flee. Many a princess would have taken it as an insult to have her castle called God's hostelry."—*Calvin to the Duchess*, dcxlvii.

† "As to my late son-in-law (Guise), any one may have proof that I did not swerve in anything on his account, and may see that he rather swerved from his course to protect me and mine. It should be known whether he did not also exert himself that Chatillon, which belongs to the admiral, should not be confiscated nor sacked. I am well aware that some persons do not wish these facts to be known. I say it before God, who knows the truth of it. Yet I would not excuse the failings of my son-in-law." In this apology Madame Renée does not, how-

The Duke of Guise took from his mother-in-law the guardianship of Montargis, set over it a renegade Protestant, forbade her to allow the gospel to her servants and finally ordered her to leave "that nest of Huguenots." He was now the only Triumvir in power, and his tyranny was excessive. She refused to go: she was aged, ill and yet courageous. A messenger came with Catherine's express orders; she still did not pack up her trunks. Then came Malicorne with four companies of horse to strike terror in the heart of one woman and compel her to submit. It was chivalrous! She saw the townsmen open the gates to the cavalry. The furious mob vied with them in savageness. They dragged a poor Huguenot from his sick-bed, beat him, tormented him, and he threw himself into the river Loing to drown, rather than be butchered. They fired upon him, drew him out and cut him to pieces with daggers. Still madame was unterrified.

"You demand my surrender," she replied to the summons. "You order me to go to one of the king's palaces. I understand it. Those places are near Paris, and not fortified. I should there be in danger of slaughter, which the king, my nephew, does not intend. I shall wait until you bring me his command." A messenger was sent to Charles.

But the Chevalier Malicorne, eager to display a Guisean spirit, made further threats: "A party will storm the citadel with battering engines; I have sent Biron to Orleans for cannon," (the duke was now besieging that city). Renée answered the upstart right royally: "Beware what you do. No one in all France has authority over me, except my king. Bring on your artillery if you dare. I will put myself in the breach and, at the risk of my life,

ever, contradict the facts of history. It is gratifying to find that some check was put upon the rough soldiery, from whose hands the barest escape was a matter of gratitude.

try whether you, or any other man, be so foolhardy as to dare slay the daughter of the best and mightiest of kings!"*

"No firing just at present," thought Malicornie, as he quailed before a courage unspeakably above his own, for he was hoping to enrich himself by plundering the sheltered Huguenots, four of whom were royal officers of high degree. He thirsted for the blood of the ministers. But God ordained his disappointment, says Beza. Guise fell by the assassin. Malicorne had no more a master "to whom he looked for further promotion," and he went to Orleans. "Thus was Montargis preserved with its refugees, each of whom afterward retired to his house in hope of enjoying the edict of peace."

On one day a genuine Huguenot lady—the wife of Condé—was in her parlour at Orleans, talking with her grand-uncle, the prisoner Montmorency. They talked of peace. "Yes, anything to get out of this pack of psalm-singers," thinks the Bench-burner. Another day, Catherine sends for the princely captive; she and Condé talk of peace and the lieutenant-generalship. "Almost anything for that," is his thought. The soft air of the court charms him. Another day, Condé and Montmorency are walking arm-in-arm on an island of the Loire, at Orleans, and they are talking of peace and the January edict. The old papist flies into a rage: "That edict shall never be restored. Every one who had a hand in drawing it up ought to be flayed alive." Condé must dilute his medicine, if he would allay the evils of war. Why not wait

* Beza, Hist. des Eglises; Memorials of Duchess Renée. "You are solicited to permit the shops of the papists to be pillaged. I take good care not to approve of such a step, whoever may have taken it. I commend you for resisting so unjust a demand. . . . I know you will set an example of charity to those who know not what it is."—*Calvin, Letters,* dclxiv.

for Coligny to arrive from the north? Catherine knows that his terms will embrace some of the solidities of liberty.

We need not wonder that Condé was persuaded to arrange a quiet pillow for the sallow, shivering, ague-stricken Andelot, and to stretch forth his hand and seize the bridles of Coligny's sweeping cavalry. The prince was ambitious. It seemed that his hour had come—an hour of office for himself and of favour for the Huguenots. Death had crept up to Rouen and by a random stroke had vacated for him his brother's position next to the king. Death had slipped through the copsewood at Dreux and given one of the six Guise brothers a mortal wound, and another a fatal cold. Death had gone to Orleans, and, with fanatical boldness, laid low the duke on whom all activity in France seemed to depend. "That single shot shattered the Catholic confederacy and changed the politics of Europe. The Guise family fell with their head into sudden ruin." To one of them Coligny had attended at Caen; to another heavy work was given at the council of Trent; and only one of them now was at court, "the Cardinal of Guise, the single member of the family who had no capacity." Death, too, had removed St. André, the decoyer employed by the women's faction. The Triumvirate was broken: only Montmorency remained, and he a prisoner at Orleans; he would veer and favour again the Chatillons. What a thinning out of the great leaders and politicians! A new order of things must come. Why should not Condé inaugurate it? Why should he not break forth from the cloud of years and show himself the statesman for the times, the grand-master of France, the lifter-up of her fallen head, the Bourbon who should crown her with glory, the prince of Protestantism and the chieftain of a league against the pope and Philip of Spain? Ambition dictated peace.

Coligny had won almost all Lower Normandy, and was

arranging for a splendid alliance with England. He had "great hopes of more success;" at least he would secure the good edict of January, on which Chandieu and other seventy ministers were insisting with such extreme zeal as to desire no tolerance to be given to "atheists and Anabaptists." But just when the admiral saw his party stronger than ever, a courier came flying into Caen with the news, "Peace is restored; lay down arms." It was amazing. It aroused his indignation. The articles wonderfully cut down the Huguenot liberties. But might he not push forward, reach Orleans before the paper was signed and prevent the wreck of his hopes? It was a long and perilous ride. He set out with his choicest cavalry, smiting towns that disputed his way and throwing certain priests into a fright. He reached Orleans: it was too late. The *treaty of Amboise* had been signed five days before.

"I could not help it," said Condé. "The queen threatened to make a stronger attack upon Orleans." He did not say that the soft air of the court had charmed him. The arts that had ruined his brother Antony were brought to bear upon him. That "flying squadron" of court ladies had him quite in their hands.

"You have sacrificed the cause of God," replied the admiral. "You have ruined more churches by one stroke of the pen than the enemy could have done by ten years of war." The articles of the treaty which concern us are these: that the Huguenots should be regarded as loyal subjects; that all foreign soldiers be sent out of the kingdom; that all captured churches and temples be restored to the proper parties; that (instead of the suburbs of every town) the suburbs of one town in each bailiwick be assigned for Protestant meetings; and that the nobility and gentry be allowed to hold worship in their own houses with their tenants. "It favours the gentlemen," said the ad-

miral; "but what of the poor, who have fought as bravely as the nobles? They must walk weary miles—women, children, the feeble and aged—or have no public worship. Many will relapse into Romanism." The Huguenots soon found that the treaty was a rope of sand.

"The conditions of the late peace are so much to our disadvantage that we have reason to invoke God more than ever to have compassion upon us and remedy such extremities. One thing is certain: we must hold down our heads and humble ourselves before God, who has admirable issues in his hand, though the beginnings are such as to astonish us. I cannot dissemble that everybody is displeased with the prince for showing himself so accommodating, and still more for being in such a hurry to conclude. It seems pretty evident, also, that he has provided better for his own personal safety than for the common repose of the poor brethren. But we ought to close our mouths, since it is God's will to afflict us. I shall always give my advice to abstain from arms. Better perish than have another war. God will bring light out of darkness."*

* Calvin's letter to Madame de Roye. The articles of the treaty are in his letter, No. dcxl., in which he says to Bullinger, "The other brother has betrayed us. The lust of power has blinded him." Nor was the treaty acceptable to the pope and Philip, who must ever be taken into account, for they wished nothing short of extermination of heresy—the one being moved by zeal and the other partly by selfishness, for Philip hoped to keep France in trouble, so that his tyranny in the Netherlands might not be checked.

CHAPTER XIII.

UNDER A CLOUD.

(1563–1564.)

THREE movements were now in progress. The whole force of the Guises was directed against Admiral Coligny, to overwhelm him with charges of complicity in the murder of the duke. The whole power of flattery, "that engine of courts," was brought to bear upon Condé, to separate him for ever from the Protestant cause. These two points gained, the Huguenots might be swept from the earth. A third scheme seemed more patriotic; it was the recovery of Havre from the English. It might enlist all parties, and serve as a means of uniting them. The first and last of these three proceedings fill large pages in history.* We shall gather up only what is most important.

Into the various papers and defences of Coligny we cannot fully enter, nor is it necessary. But the affair was a drama, with its scenes enacted wherever the court sojourned for long months. The king could not get rid of it. All Europe was interested in the fact of Coligny's innocence, and in the result of the efforts made to destroy him. It brought France to a new crisis.

The drama was opened by an imposing scene at court, devised by skilful managers, who made their stroke in behalf of the late Duke of Guise. His mother and Anne his

* Various papers in Mém. de Condé; Thuani, Hist. Mezeray, Perau, Castelnau, Davila, Vita Colinii, Mémoires relatifs à l'Histoire de France.

widow, with the children, veiled women filling the air with their cries and groans, and a train of relatives, all robed in black, came into the king's presence with all possible ceremony. The two duchesses knelt before him, and solemnly uttered the word "Justice!" The king offered to raise them up, when they asked him to institute a close inquiry into the foul crime which had brought desolation into their family. If Catherine had not arranged the affair, she gave a promise that the case should be investigated, and thus fanned the flames of party strife.

The Guises took their leave, not suspecting that their visit was to work against themselves, and strengthen the man whom they sought to crush. Odet Coligny was coming to court. He had laid aside his red hat and Papal robes soon after his conversion to the truth, and assumed the title of Count of Beauvais. The pope knew all about his support of Protestant preaching, and his contempt of Roman honours. Pius IV. was not the man to let one who might have aspired to the Papal chair rest quiet in his heresy. He was shocked at "the monstrous deformity" of religion in France. Referring to such men as Odet de Chatillon, Montluc, Bishop of Valence,* and Caraccioli, the Reformer at Troyes, he was accustomed to say, "These masked heretics do more harm than those who are outspoken in public." As there was no Inquisition in France to drag them, and others like them, before it, he cited them to appear at Rome, and purge themselves of the charge of heresy. But they had no relish for the purgatives of an inquisitorial committee so far away. The pope had no right thus to summon them. The liberties of the Gallican

* The bishops of Valence and of Montpelier are set down as Protestants by the editor of Rabelais' works. Gabutius mentions seven French bishops who were deposed for heresy.—*Policy of Church of Rome.*

Church assured to every bishop a trial by twelve of his own rank and country. The pope was angry. He was preparing an excommunication for Chatillon, who chose a wife and was married in his cardinal's cap and robes.* In these he often appeared at court, or in parliament, or on very ceremonious occasions, as an irony upon the pope's charge of being a "masked heretic." His wife was the excellent Elizabeth de Hautville, who was often styled *Madame le Cardinal.*

Calvin wrote to Coligny, saying: "We are very sorry that the journey of the count has been retarded, for it is very desirable that he should be at court. But we see that he had good reasons to delay, lest he should expose himself to danger, and also to sound the disposition of the people. We thank God that you have resolved to go as soon as he shall arrive thither, and inform you that there is no risk." It was Catherine and Condé who informed the admiral of the risk, so that after he came he was persuaded to return to Chatillon, leaving his friends to defend him. Odet protested against the promise made by the king to the Guise duchesses. His brother, the admiral, as a Huguenot, could hardly obtain justice from men who were partizans. "Very true," thought the king.

"But we must press the matter," whispered Catherine in the ear of her son, "and thus induce Condé to discard Coligny." What cared she for accused or accusers, if she might only divide and reign?

* Sarpi, Pallavicino. Calvin wrote to the admiral: "Touching the cardinal's hat, we know very well that it is not a thing of such importance as many people would make it. But you are aware that we cannot altogether exculpate him. In conscience we cannot help saying that there was a certain degree of levity in his conduct in that matter. We would show those who are offended, and who make war upon him that it is pardonable, and that we highly esteem him as he deserves."—*Letter to Coligny,* 5th July, 1563.

"We must not pursue the case," said certain members of parliament. "If we do, we risk another civil war. There is not a Huguenot who will refuse to defend his leader." Yet proceedings were begun. Coligny must be ruined while Condé was under temptation. Not a stone must be left unturned, if it would let loose a viper to hiss in evidence against the admiral. It was another crisis. The tongues of nearly all France were engaged in discussing the questions involved. We can touch only the leading points.

"Let there be a fair trial," demanded the entire Huguenot nobility. "Let the queen-mother be asked why she did not permit the admiral to confront the man who quenched that firebrand which for thirteen months threw all France into a blaze. We, too, demand justice. Let inquiry be made whether the Guises have not sent their agents to take the life of our great leader." This loud remonstrance could not be hushed.

"My brother wishes a hearing," said Andelot to Catherine. "His conscience is clear before God, and he is ready to make clear his actions before his proper judges." The hypocritical queen was troubled; the haste in executing Poltrot was creating a suspicion against herself.

"This is an odious persecution," was the purport of Condé's addresses and long letters. "The admiral is about to be hounded to death—but not if I can help it. Goods, office, life, everything, I am ready to lay down in the defence of my best friend, the uncle of my wife, the man who has rendered to the state his earnest services, and who was not the author of the late war, whether that war be considered just or rebellious. Madame, that innocent, fearless man was on his way hither, anxious to present his case to you. He was unwilling to hide in a corner, as a guilty wretch in dread of the law. It was at your request that

I drew him aside and showed him his danger: I argued and finally prevailed. I sent him back to Chatillon, and there he groans under the burden of these charges.* There he draws his wife and children around him, and waits to know whether he is to be torn from them by fair but rude hands. . . . The enmity of the Guises against the Chatillons is notorious. Religion has divided them. I beseech you, do not allow the name and the power of the king to be used in so perverting religion that it shall be made to favour the one house or the other. Let each be treated on the ground of legal justice." Catherine was foiled. The prince would never discard his truest friend.

With these words a crisis passed. The scale had turned, and yet a tremendous hand was laid to the beam. It was that of the whole house of Montmorency. The aged baron, the last of the Triumvirate, was won back to the old regard for his nephews—one good result of the vigorous attack upon Coligny. "I take up the cause of my injured cousin," said Francis Montmorency, who had taken Condé prisoner at Dreux, and who now rose as the prince sat down in the council. (And here we remark that the civil wars of France were generally caused by the strifes between rival houses—the Guises against the Bourbons—but the Montmorencies† had just sided against the Chatillons. Coligny must have been touched to see them take his part so stoutly at this critical moment.) "It is the intention of the constable, my father, to sustain his nephews as his own chil-

* Coligny had followed up his written defence by leaving home and going to St. Germain with a company of nearly six hundred gentlemen.

† "The constable grows milder every day. . . . The constable unflinchingly defends the edict [of Amboise] which confers liberty on our churches, guarantees security to them, and gives it as his opinion that the edict ought to be maintained intact."—*Calvin's Letters, 2d July and 9th September*, 1563.

dren, and to employ in their favour all his credit and power. In his name, in the name of the whole family, I protest against this assault upon the admiral, and in his defence I offer my sword, my goods, my life."

Catherine trembled. She wished she had never seen the widowed Guises, nor promised them their sort of "justice." A thousand swords might leap from their scabbards to silence the accusers of her safest counsellor. The whole council saw the frightful verge on which hung the government. The king took alarm. The result was an order for the two parties to hush all proceedings, retire to their homes and wait for calmer days and cooler judgments.

To unite all parties in a patriotic work, the summons had gone forth for Papist and Huguenot to drive the English from Havre. Guisard and Bourbon responded, greatly to the surprise of Elizabeth. Condé, now lured into the nets of the court, blinded by a wicked passion, and ready to follow the gay flatterers wherever bound, cheerfully assented to Catherine when she laughingly said, "You led the English into France, and now you are obliged to drive them out." But the Chatillons, less forgetful of the bargain with Elizabeth, and quite certain that they would soon need her kindly aid again, excused themselves. "My affairs at Chatillon require attention," said the admiral. "And I must shake off these killing agues," said Andelot.* They were excused, but their old Huguenot soldiers fought at Havre so cordially by the side of their late foes that the chancellor, proud of his work in the last edict, looked on with honest exultation, saying, "Behold the effect of a pacification of which some have dared to complain. It reunites the royal family, restores to us our brothers, estab-

* Their uncle was almost as averse to the enterprise. "It is with great difficulty that the constable has been at length induced to lead an army against the English."—*Calvin*, 2d July, 1563.

lishes public safety, and once more renders the nation respectable for its virtue and power." Sir Chancellor, wait a little! Havre was regained.* "Let our gratitude be expressed," said the queen-mother, "by founding a grand hospital for maimed soldiers, giving them a home for life, on the plan which the admiral has so often suggested." It was to be a sort of *Hôtel des Invalides*. Had Coligny been favoured, the project might not have failed.

Beza tells us that the admiral and Andelot—the one having lost his eldest son and the other his eldest daughter—being now again at home, celebrated the Lord's supper at Easter, which was done with great rejoicings on the part of those of the Religion, who gave many thanks to God for the present state of their affairs. A few days afterward the admiral came to his seat of justice, invoked the name of God and commanded that the sittings should thenceforth open with prayer, according to a form which he soon had engraved on a tablet and placed in the hall. Jean Malot, his minister, spoke of the causes of the late calamities, exhorting the magistrates to act justly and the subjects to live in obedience to their superiors. Also, said he, "let the admiral look well to these things."

"To this work," replied Coligny, "may the Lord spare me to devote the rest of my life. In gratitude for what God has done, by giving us peace in so short a time, and to encourage all the officers of justice, I shall increase your

* "The house of Guise was under eclipse. . . . The policy of France was again ready to be moderate, national, anti-Spanish, anti-papal—to be all which England would most desire to see it. It was imperatively necessary that Elizabeth should make peace, that she endure as best she might the supposed ingratitude of Condé, and accept the easiest terms to which Catherine de Medici would now consent." By the terms Elizabeth was not denied her claim to Calais in 1567, of which the Huguenot leaders would again take advantage.—*Froude's England*, viii. 60.

salaries. If any offer you bribes, chastise them severely. I am apprised that during my absence many have grievously offended me, both by word and deed; but I forgive the past; I expect better things in future. I pray you all to give diligent heed to the word of God, and I will do all in my power to have it preached to you all, as the king's edicts allow."

"But the last edict takes away our church from us," said some of the people. "You have been occupying the church which you took from the priests during the war. You must restore it. Let them come back and take it if they choose. We can go into the open fields." But the priests refused to resume their offices at Chatillon. The church was neglected, and the Protestants again used it for their worship.*

Riding one day with Andelot into the town, he came upon a poor "gentleman"—for many even of the nobles were in distress—and he said to his brother, "It cannot be pleasing to God that we should go so well clad and comfortable while this poor gentleman is so destitute. He is of the same rank with us, and just as much a patriot as we are. If there be any difference, it is that he has suffered more, and yet has more patience." The wanderer was clothed and given every needed comfort.

On a day when he was setting out for church he put his alms-money in his pocket to cast it into the treasury.

* "All things are peaceable at Lyons. The priests are moderate; nay, they fawn upon our brethren. They have as yet got up but one mass, and that on a profane altar, there being no consecrated one. At Montpelier, Nismes and other cities our brethren are still in possession of the churches, because no one of the opposite party ventures to claim them." (City councils often permitted or enjoined that the Protestants should hold these churches.) Ten days later: "In the provinces they obstinately refuse to admit our brethren. In the long run they will have to be compelled by force of arms, and despair is driving them on to reckless courses."—*Calvin*, 19th and 29th July, 1563.

Meeting a man whom war had impoverished, he unwittingly put his hand in the wrong pocket and gave him several pieces of gold, and went on his way. After the public worship, Coligny was returning, and the pauper, who had been amazed at the largeness of the gift, was waiting for him. "Sir," said he, "I cannot think that it was your intention to give me so great a sum. I am not so dishonest as to take advantage of your carelessness."

"True, my good man," replied Coligny. "It was my mistake, but your honesty shall be rewarded. I shall leave it all with you." Nor was this the end. The admiral made him his guest at the castle, finding him "an example of virtue." Learning one day that a very diffident woman was at his door, begging only for her starving infant, the admiral took the most generous charge of her and her family.

In such deeds Coligny was happiest. He founded hospitals in his villages for the sick and persecuted, workshops for the vagabonds, schools for the children and parishes for all who hungered for the word of life. While a Romanist, he had been charitable and earnest in elevating the people around him. One of his biographers naïvely says that "he did not discontinue this good work after he yielded to the new religion; the change was in this: in place of the priests, he brought in the ministers."*

And yet his life was not safe. About this period his enemies put the assassin upon his track. He had for some years in his service a man of noble birth, named Hambrevilliers, who sent letters to "certain persons, whom it would now be improper to name," says his first biographer,† and promising that he would soon execute his commission. The letters fell into hands which were not in the secret, and were sent to Coligny. He could not believe that

* Courtiltz, Perau. † Vita Colinii.

his servant, so honest and faithful for years, was involved in the plot, but justice demanded an inquiry. He sent for him and desired an explanation. "I am surprised that you think me engaged in such a foul work," said Hambrevilliers, with an air of injured innocence. "I deny having written any such letter."

"I am glad of it," replied Coligny; "but as it is important for me to be sure, I beg you to take a pen and show me your handwriting." The man could not refuse, but he was so alarmed that his penmanship betrayed him as the author of the letter. "I am convinced," said the admiral, "and you must be also by this time." The traitor threw himself at the feet of Coligny and begged for mercy.

"My only revenge shall be this," said the good admiral: "I expel you from my service. You must inform those who employed you that there are other methods more honourable for getting rid of a man whom they wish to injure. I will not ask who they are. As you are from Lorraine, I forgive you. You may now consider yourself bound to serve the house of Guise." Coligny thenceforth gave orders for his steward to carefully inspect whatever went upon his table.

The Colignys had their thoughts upon another siege, more important to their cause of liberty and religion than that of a northern sea-port. It was the temptation of Condé. They saw their niece dying of grief, deserted by the prince whom they had once persuaded her to accept as a husband, and thus strengthened their Reformed party. It was she who had risked everything to cheer him in his prison when the sentence of death hung over him. It was she who had knelt before the queen and besought his pardon. She, too, had a noble part in the late treaty. She had nursed the veteran Montmorency while a prisoner at Orleans. She had gone to the queen and entreated for peace. She had

won the freedom of her husband. And now, as a wife and mother, she knew that he was playing the fool at a court whose smooth arts had ruined his brother Antony. She begged him to avoid the evil net, but neither her tears nor her fatal sorrows could bring him to sobriety. Would he prove a traitor to his cause?

"Put not your trust in princes" was a lesson that was not yet fully learned. There are times when very much depends upon a man. None can deny it, however strong the faith in Jehovah; for he employs agents to exalt or humiliate. It was so in the days of Joseph in Egypt, of Esther and Ezra in Babylon, and of the elector who defended Luther. From Edinburgh to Geneva, all felt that the Reformed Church was at a crisis. Very much depended upon Condé. The Romanists perceived it; hence their most artful exertions. One of their later writers says: "Had Catherine made him lieutenant-general, as she had promised, and as the peace of the kingdom required, he would have changed his religion, or at least would never again have made it an affair of the state, and by degrees the zeal of the innovators, when irritated by no resistance, might have declined." No doubt this was saying too much: the writer knew neither Condé nor the temper of the Huguenots. And yet there was ground for such an opinion.

Calvin knew the events hinged upon the conduct of the prince. Let him express the general anxiety of the Reformed party: "Though the queen caresses the Prince of Condé, yet the versatile and crafty woman inspires us with very little or no confidence. Yet, destitute as she is of sincerity, she would nevertheless comply with the prince if she saw in him a prudent and magnanimous man. . . . Either the faint-heartedness and cowardice of Condé outstrip all belief, or we shall have some favourable changes ere long."*

* Letter to Bullinger, 2d July, 1563.

"At Paris, the queen encourages and inflames the furious passions of the people. Every day new disturbances are breaking out. The parliament is entirely without authority. An armed rabble sets aside with impunity all its decisions. When robbers govern, licentiousness will prevail. Condé keeps silence."*

All along since the treaty of peace Calvin had been writing to Condé, who was one of the most faithfully warned men that ever lived: "If you do not make good by your authority what you have gained for our brethren, the peace will be like a body without a soul. Experience has proved to you how audaciously the enemies of God undertake to do evil, unless they be vigorously resisted. You need not one word from me to point out to you how many people are watching to get the upper hand. You know their manœuvres; if you give them leisure to surprise you, they will not fail to profit by it, and when once they have their foot in the stirrup, it will not be possible to restrain them. Labour more than ever for the gospel, since God holds out his hand to you. Prove yourself worthy in his sight."†

"We beseech you not only to take under your protection the cause of our Lord, so that the poor followers of God may be left in peace and security, but also to testify by your whole life that you have profited by the gospel of salvation. Let your example edify the good as well as shut the mouths of all gainsayers. Being raised to such a preeminent rank, as you are gazed at from afar, so beware that men find nothing to blame in your conduct. You cannot doubt, monseigneur, that we cherish your honour almost as much as we desire your salvation. Now we should be traitors to you if we left you in ignorance of the rumours

* To Bullinger, 19th July, 1563.

† To Condé, 10th May, 1563—slightly condensed.

that are flying about. We do not believe that at bottom there is any evil in your conduct, or that God is directly offended"—Calvin did not yet know the worst—"but when we are told that you are making love to ladies, we think that this greatly derogates from your authority and reputation. Good men will be grieved and the malicious will laugh at it. There is also in that dissipation something which prevents you from attending to your duty. Nay, it is possible that in all this there may be a degree of worldly vanity; and you should especially take care that the light which God has set within you be not dimmed nor extinguished."*

Despite all this—the pleas and prayers of Calvin, the conviction that his position was immensely important to the cause he had avowed, and the tears of a deserted wife—Condé was yielding to the excesses of the worst of courts. That wife, ever inciting him to noble deeds, was dying, the victim of her honest but abused affections. And he was listening to the same old lures—the isle of Sardinia, the hand of Mary Stuart, the Scottish throne, perhaps a new triumvirate. The widow of St. André, professing in his ear to cherish the Reform, saw the devoted Eleanor de Roye dying of a broken heart, and she hoped to be the successor. She held out her hand and the magnificent palace of St. Valery, asking him to take them both. He took the gift, but refused to take the giver.

It was the price of infamy; and no wonder that he felt ashamed even to stay longer in that corrupt court, where Catherine sought to make sure of her own power by weakening that of the nobility. Calvin felt all the disgust and grief possible, and he wrote: "The Prince of Condé left the court about a month ago,† because the queen-mother

* To Condé, 17th September, 1563.

† To Bullinger, 2d December, 1563.

had craftily kept in suspense the marriage of her son with the daughter of St. André; thus in truth betraying the cause of Christ, he has consulted only his own interest and personal advantages. Although nobody feels any great solicitude to have him appeased, his indignation will evaporate of its own accord."*

Two things saved Condé. One was the fact that Catherine still withheld from him the promised office of lieutenant-general; the other was the position taken by the brave, upright Coligny.

This man could not desert a sick wife, to whom both he and his great Huguenot cause were so much indebted. Had he written of her illness to Calvin? We only know that the Reformer, himself an invalid, wrote thus to her: "I thank God for your recovery from an illness which we had great reason to fear might be mortal. I did not fail to have you in remembrance, for it is but just that both the admiral and yourself should be objects of the deepest interest to all true servants of God, in the number of whom I hope to be reckoned, though I am more than unworthy of that honour. . . . Afflictions should be medicines to purify us, and, since they are messengers of death, we ought to learn to have one foot raised to take our departure when it shall please God." A timely thought, for soon he should go to his rest, and not long after be followed by the excellent Charlotte. "I am very glad that the admiral thinks of going to court on the first occasion that will present itself. I hope for much good from the journey, and pray God to prosper it."†

Already had Calvin urged him, "Go to the court as soon as there shall be no risk, for we have learned by your absence from it how profitable it would have been had you

* To Bullinger, 2d December, 1563.

† To Madame de Coligny, 5th August, 1563.

always remained there. It seems that everything must go from bad to worse, if God do not speedily prevent it, as we trust he will by means of you. Thus persuaded that he has reserved you for this purpose, we earnestly beg you not to let slip any opportunity. For your presence, at any rate, will impose upon your enemies." Still later Calvin wrote: "The admiral makes apologies, saying that he prefers to remain at home and wait a favourable opportunity to throw himself into danger."*

"The king is going to Fontainebleau," said the Guises, "and, being so near to Chatillon, he will be quite sure of a visit from Coligny. We shall prevent it"—they said this to the queen-mother—"for Aumale will go thither with more than a thousand horsemen." They imagined themselves the most popular of all the great houses.

"They threaten you," was the message borne by a swift courier to the admiral. "There will be trouble if you come."

"I am already on the way," was the reply by a trusty messenger. "Am I to be prevented a second time from appearing before my king?"

"I'll arrange it," said Charles, who had fears of a battle at Fontainebleau. "I shall dine to-morrow at Chailly, two leagues on Coligny's route." At this place the king and his best friend met. Catherine was present. They talked long. "I hope it may please you," said Coligny, "that I am coming forth from my retirement. It is my design to fill again my offices, and take the rank which it is my honour to hold at court. I think my presence necessary, in order to suppress this factious spirit of opposition, and to secure the safety of my friends."

"But the whole house of Guise will rise up—"

* Letters of 5th July and 19th July, 1563.

"And go down, too, if their vanity be inordinate."* Coligny touched upon one point which must have put even Catherine to the blush. "It has been observed everywhere that there was a strange contrast between the funeral ceremonies of the late king Francis II. and those of the late Duke of Guise. How scanty and negligent the one! how grand and imposing the other! The one was buried as a menial, of whom all were glad to get rid; the other as a monarch, on whose life the fate of the world had hung." All this was too true. Catherine quailed under the voice of a man who in one day might arouse the hosts of a people to rebuke arrogance and secure justice. He was permitted to return with them to the capital.

It was a great day in Paris when Coligny entered its gates, attended by a larger train of nobles and gentlemen than had been seen for twenty years. "That overshadows the triumphal entry of the hero of Vassy," is the remark from the windows. "Old times are coming back." The king gave him welcome. "The constable, that he might stir up the bile of the envious," says Calvin, "went to his lodgings, and after breakfast took him to the king's palace. There he was present at a deliberation, in which it is supposed a great many matters were discussed"—(the Poltrot case among them, no doubt). "The partisans of Guise decamped, with bag and baggage, to another quarter of the city." They were astonished at the grandeur of Coligny's reception, envious of his popularity and fearful of his power. They even put their hotel in a state of defence.

The Duke of Nemours, a Guisard, ran to the queen, say-

* "The Guises have been bridled; nor, indeed, did they dare to interpose [and throw obstacles in the way of executing the edicts], while the king menaced, for the admiral was present with superior forces. Hope has again shone out on us."—*Calvin to Bullinger*, 20th October, 1563.

ing, "Our party is amazed that you suffer the admiral to come in such close contact with your son, the king. We could not endure his presence."

"Why so?" she replied, having changed her tactics, and hoping to prevent a break with Condé. "He is an old servant of the king, and there is no reason to exclude him from a visit. The king desired it. Besides, there is room for everybody. I advise you all to return;" which advice they did not take.

The king was on the point of going to the parliament and taking the admiral along with him.* The business in hand was "the inquiry" promised to the Guises. Their wrath must have been flaming when the king issued a decree suspending it for three years; at the end of which time we shall have another scene of the duchesses. In their attempt to ruin Coligny they had exalted him, and saved Condé from complete ruin by the wiles of Catherine.

The Valois and Guisean amiabilities were at a discount, even among the younger members of these families. "God seems to turn children's sport into serious earnest," said Calvin. The widow of Guise ran one day to Catherine, saying, "Your son Henry has struck my son Henry with an arrow."

"He was greatly provoked to do it," was the reply. "But my family shall not be insulted," rejoined Anne of Guise. Catherine called her son and said, "You were not quite in the right. You should pardon young Guise."

"I'll not do it," was the bold answer. "I cannot bear the sight of him. I detest the whole family, which has brought so much trouble into the kingdom." He was sent out from his mother's presence. She healed the wounds. These lads will appear as Guise and Anjou, thick enough in the Papal unity. Calvin wrote: "The queen-mother

* Calvin's Letters, 2d December, 1563.

pretends to mediate between all parties, but many tokens of her perfidy are remarked. The chancellor is liberal as usual with his edicts, but few obey them. Unless the queen speedily come to a rupture with the Guises, formidable convulsions will again break out."*

The ashes of the volcano of human depravity were falling everywhere. An eruption was expected. "The republic is perishing," wrote the Chancellor de l'Hôpital to President de Thou, "while we abandon ourselves to sensual enjoyments. Luxury, like a torrent, has entered the palaces of the great and the cottages of the humble; all are flooded with it. To me it is a token of cruel wars and a future slavery. Time was when virtue consisted in repressing the passions; now we have the baseness to admire the man who is their blindest slave. To whom shall we confide the public interests? Are not all hearts poisoned? The corrupted citizen dreads fatigue and danger; instead of defending his country, he prefers dishonourable repose to immortal glory." One reference was to Condé, still at Valery.

It was well for the Huguenots that Catherine had already secured the full crowning of her son Charles. It helped to save Condé from being lured into the desertion of his party by the hope of the regency. An old law of Charles the Wise fixed the majority of a young king at fourteen years, but did not determine whether it was the beginning or the close of the fourteenth year. On that ground the chancellor advised Catherine to declare her son qualified to reign.

The name of Charles IX. might have become an honour to royalty had it not been for his education. He had been endowed with an active mind and a kindly heart; but his home was a scene of deception, intrigue and vice. His

* To Bullinger, 19th July and 30th September, 1563.

mother went from her prayers to encourage the most abhorrent pleasures. She early made him familiar with cruelty. He amused himself by striking off the heads of animals at a blow. She infused into him the inclinations of a butcher, so that he might in time contract those of an executioner. At almost every scaffold or stake in Paris she pointed out to him the glory of hanging or burning heretics.

Yet he had his shop in the palace, where his hammer rang upon the anvil as he made locks and horse-shoes. He would haste from the table to engage in the chase, and thence return to work at his forge. He hated the house, calling it the grave of the living. A moral education might have made him a rival of Peter the Great in his promotion of the useful arts. But his mother was not his only bad teacher. She had brought from Italy Albert Gondi, whom Brantome describes as "cunning, cautious, corrupt, lying, a great dissembler, swearing and denying God like a porter." This man, known in history as Marshal de Retz, taught Charles to vent his rage in terrible oaths and blasphemies, "perverted him in every possible way, and made him forget the wholesome instructions of the excellent Cipièrre." The word "excellent" was quite ironical, for this man "indulged in an oath sometimes, but it was as a cavalier, not like Gondi, who blasphemed like a common catchpole when he seizes a poor wretch by the collar." The latter "was the greatest blasphemer in cold blood that was ever heard. . . . And so the king learned this vice, thinking it an elegance rather than a sin. Therefore he had no difficulty in breaking his faith whenever it came into his head." Even Brantome knew that a man's word and pledges are only weakened by profanity.*

Rough and sometimes brutal in temper, blunt in manner,

* Brantome, Vie de Roi Charles IX.; Varillas.

coarse in speech and soldier-like in his eloquence, yet Charles had a certain rude generosity, and he could appreciate the integrity and virtue of others when he needed them. Hence good men had great hopes of him. The chancellor trusted that he might curb his turbulent nobles, but said to Catherine, "You must expect your authority to diminish rather than increase." "I will take care of that," was her thought; "enough that it gives me an excuse for not making Condé lieutenant-general." The ceremony of declaring Charles in his majority took place at Rouen, August 17th, 1563, when Catherine bent her knee at the foot of the throne and put in his hands all the royal power. He embraced her, saying, "I shall still want your counsels. You will share with me in the government as much, if not more, than ever." And indeed she did.

Calvin, in his "obscure corner" at Geneva, uttered the general Protestant sentiment in regard to this business: "The queen is straining every nerve to have the majority of her son pronounced, though he has scarcely completed his thirteenth year. He has himself, however, proclaimed it in the parliament of Rouen." The six other parliaments of France, and especially that of Paris, hesitated to take such a bold step. . . . "The chancellor, who was our friend, begins to recover from his timidity and take heart. . . . All the intrigues of the Cardinal of Lorraine, to his great disgrace, will come to nothing. The king is nominally major, but is really under the will of another, and that, too, almost like a slave. He would not be unfavourable to us if he durst express an opinion. . . . Good men are afraid that the queen-mother, unless she be bridled," will lend her aid to the Papal and Savoy faction, and "destroy entirely this city." Let the Swiss league with us "in defending the French churches and their liberties. It will promote their interests to have the king bound down not to abjure the

cause of protecting religion." Still later, in one of his very last letters, Calvin wrote sadly: "The king has gone to Lorraine on a secret journey. No doubt he will sell himself to the Cardinal of Lorraine."* History removes the doubt and gives us the bargain. It was the price of blood.

Like court, like realm; in each, the Protestants were at the mercy of an opposing tide. The case of the good Duchess of Ferrara may be a sufficient illustration of the better side of Huguenot affairs. She and her ministers had joined with Calvin in denouncing the military spirit, and this brought her favour at court, but deprived her of proper respect from Condé and most of his party. She threw her doors open to Romanist as well as Huguenot refugees, and was not insulted to hear her castle called "God's hostelry." She hoped to do some good at court, and while there she and her friends drew the notice of the Spanish Chantonnay, who wrote to his master: "They do little else here than preach sermons and sing psalms. Daily prayers are said in the apartments of the Prince of Condé, with the help of all who have the will to go there." "She has left; a very notable good."

She tells us why she left the court. At Fontainebleau "I remained a whole month. The reason of my leaving before the king was that I was forbidden to have preaching there, as I had done for some days. Not only in the house of the king was this refused me, but also in one which I bought in the village and dedicated to that purpose, leaving it for others to use when I was absent from court.† What

* To Bullinger, 9th September, 2d December, 1563; 6th April, 1564.

† "You have shown by your decision that a residence at Paris was very little to your taste," wrote Calvin. "True, it would have been very desirable for you to remain there, for the relief of the poor churches, but I am not surprised that you seek a happier manner of life."

grieves me most, is that this has taken place at the solicitation of a man and his wife who are communicants, and who have their [Protestant] ministers. The Admiral and his wife did not arrive until the day that I departed. As to having preaching, they were not able to do more than I did, and they left a week afterward. They and their brother, the cardinal, came to this place [Montargis] to tell me of it all. . . . It is long since I began the work among my subjects, and I am now striving to complete it, if it shall please God. I wish to administer justice and provide daily for the poor, whether they be dwellers here or sojourners and travellers; as well as to watch over my own household of faith, so that no vices nor scandals may arise. . . .

"De Collonges (Francis Morel) has all along had the entire charge of the church here, and he knows, before God, that I have assisted him in what he has required. From the first, when he demanded of me that he should be present at the consistory,* I granted it to him, and he chose elders as seemed good to him. When he told me that it was not right that women should be present at it, nor that I should be there, although I knew that the Queen of Navarre, madame the Admiral's wife and Madame de Roye took their place there in their own houses, yet I did not insist upon going thither. I have not ceased to exhort my people to attend, and there to serve God as he may teach them, except in one case, that of a young domestic who I feared might commit some insolent act; as indeed he did, for he went into the kitchen and struck an old man who was in bad health, and who had not adopted the Reformed religon." She was not a bigot, nor one who sought to rule. "I do not know that those of the city molest anybody.

"I receive help and counsel from the admiral, next to the

* The reference seems to be to a session of the pastor and elders for giving instruction to those in madame's service.

help and counsel of God, for the repression of scandals and vices. It is manifest that among his subjects (at Chatillon) religion thrives and increases, although some there oppose it, as in this place. The greater part of his subjects are in my bailiwick, and he has established preaching among them, which had not been done before, except at Bonny. Most of the members of my household whom I employ are of the Reformed religion and communicants. A few are not, but I hope that God will draw them to himself. Yet some of the Reformed have ill-treated them, driving them away from banquets and festivals; and I have allowed them to go home myself, remaining without any of my waiting-women—a thing not usual with persons of my quality. . . . I esteem both mine and myself honoured by such treatment. . . . God give me grace to serve him purely and sincerely as you desire.

"As to what I have heard charged upon the ministers and children of God, I have not held my peace, but have taken upon me to protect them with more care than myself. There are those who endeavour to banish them from this kingdom, and to their designs one ought not to yield."* We are glad that her request "to burn this letter" was not fulfilled. It shows us her love for "the preach," her trials, her reproaches, and the strifes which religious differences carried into her house and into that of her friend the admiral. Peace was not the privilege of any one in that age, noble or royal.

The admiral had reason to watch his uncle Montmorency. This last of the Triumvirs grew wrathy because the treaty of Amboise was not rigorously applied to the Huguenots. Wherever the Protestants had the majority, they extended the liberty of the edict, and held their meet-

* Memorials of Duchess Renée; Calvin's Letters; Lettre de Chantonai; Mém. de Condé.

ings for the worship of God. They went farther; they began to form secret unions, so that they might be ready for defensive war at the call of their chieftains. They had their rallying signs, their watchwords and their plans of campaign. In other places, where they were the weaker party, they sought to enjoy all that the law allowed them. Imagine about seventy-five thousand scattered Huguenots walking several leagues to celebrate their worship in a privileged town! All this inflamed the soul of the gray-headed Montmorency, who was the chief author of the treaty. At his house often gathered men who were ever ready to act upon any hint he gave them, and carry out any measures hé proposed.

"The longer we have peace the stronger will the Huguenots become, and they will alarm the queen into their measures," said the Papal chief. "Coligny and the chancellor will have their own way, as they would have had before if our trio had not driven them from court. Catherine will join herself to them as soon as they have the majority. War is the only remedy. Let it come—I care not how soon."

"We understand," said the murmurers; and they laid their plot. About three hundred leading Protestants were marked out for destruction. Everything was arranged for a massacre. Conspirators were to be posted throughout Paris, to excite the Romanists and direct them in the work of plunder and murder. Montmorency was to give the order at his own house. But Jean d'Albret, or Coligny, happily discovered the plan, and informed the queen. For once, at least, she must have the credit of preventing a slaughter with an earnestness that alarmed the most desperate. Confused and in fear, Montmorency retired to Chantilly over a path of disgrace well trodden before, and some of his most furious accomplices were hanged at their

own windows, without any form of trial; the others were allowed to escape.*

If these things were attempted at the capital, what might not be expected in the provinces? Wherever the Romanists were most numerous, they prevented the Huguenots from assembling in their one privileged mansion or town. The clergy entered into the crusade, publishing abroad the anathemas of the pope, and bawling aloud in horror of heresy. Many a devout Huguenot was waylaid on his tiresome journey to the place where he could sing psalms with his brethren, and his friends never saw him return. Many a house was entered, and the worshippers treated with outrage, imprisonment and murder. The Protestants were compelled to furnish bread for Papal masses, and give money to the priests, whom they would not dare to meet at the confessional. It was death for one of them to appeal to the laws. The Roman Catholics began to meet and bind themselves together in secret associations for the uprooting of heresy. They had their password, their rallying signals and their schemes of war. Out of these grew the great League of a later day, which filled the land with woe from the time of the awful St. Bartholomew to the joyful Edict of Nantes.

The treaty of Amboise was not worthy the name of a peace; it was a mere suspension of arms. It simply meant that the Romanists were to be let alone, take breath, refresh their strength and then overwhelm the Huguenots. In the mean time there was a fearful struggle of man against man, house against house, town against town, party against party. A Guise led the Burgundian nobles to declare that they could no more endure two religions in France than heaven

* Mémoires de Vieilleville, a Romanist of Catherine's party, who devotes two chapters to the above affair. Some, however, say that Montmorency was to be one of the victims, along with De l'Hôpital.

could bear two suns. One religious party must conquer the other. Each was resolved not to be conquered. The forces of two vast armies were mingling together, engaging in lesser skirmishes and waiting for the day and the place of battle. Catherine may have been sincere in wishing peace to be preserved. "The government has no desire to break the edict, for it would create a disturbance," writes Hugh Languet, "as our churches are more crowded than they have ever been." And still she said to St. Croix, "Whenever circumstances permit, I will do whatever the pope desires."

Not to follow Beza and De Thou* in their extended review of the persecutions endured by the Protestants after the treaty, nor to draw horrors from the records of martyrology, we may have some idea of their desperate condition from the words of Pasquier, who was no friend to them: "The Huguenots have lost more by edicts in time of peace than by force in time of war." It would rack the gloomiest imagination to conceive of all the modes of torture and death; it would make our pages disgusting, and even obscene, to describe them. "Let them be forgotten," is the demand. Let it not be forgotten that such endurances were part of the price paid for our civil and religious liberty.

It is pleasant, after hard search, to find one little green isle even in the glacier of woe. The Huguenots of Gap were ordered to deliver up their arms. They trembled. It was an old trick. But the good officer, Jacques Philippeaux, protected them by the law which wrested from them their means of self-defence, granted them liberty of con-

* One may be astonished to find that the persecutions and martyrdoms of the years 1562–1563 fill so large a space in the volumes of Beza, De Thou, De Serres and Crespin; as well as in the Mémoires of Montluc, Tavannes, Condé, La Noue and a score of others.

science, and allowed them to bury their dead in the general cemetery, with their own services, until another place could be provided. It was a rare instance of just rule.

By this time Coligny had learned that human nature could not be trusted, especially if ingrained with popery. He had spies about himself; he sent spies to watch his foes. He had good, active agents at the council of Trent to keep their eyes upon the Cardinal of Lorraine, whom we have missed for months. The council had been holding its sessions for almost twenty years, and, with the pompous cardinal to help wind up its affairs, some big woe might be expected upon France. To make sure all its decisions, one crowning dogma was presented to the faith of Christendom: it was that the pope was infallible—the sovereign pastor of the Church. That Frenchmen might all be known as his sheep, a swarm of legates from all Romish countries came pouring into France, to show the king how to purify the fold. One step was, that he should give them a private hearing at Fontainebleau: this was granted by him and his mother. Another was, that he and his clergy should accept the doctrines of the council of Trent: Catherine was not ready for this, as it was not yet her political interest. A third was, that the heretics should be punished without mercy: this must be calmly considered, as the Huguenots were not willing to be exterminated. A fourth was, that the authors of the death of Guise should be condemned as guilty of high treason: this was not easy, for, if the infallible pope could even point out the authors, they must first be tried in their own country. The legates departed in their coaches, whispering their fears of Catherine's lukewarmness in "the Italian religion." She had seemed to be afraid of the great Protestant power in her realm. The Papal sheep were not yet to be fattened on the blood of her subjects, so long as Coligny and the chancellor held her in check.

"Ha! monsieur," said the chancellor to Lorraine, in one of the loud debates, "have you returned to trouble us with these foreign decrees?"

"I am not come to trouble *you*," was the rough reply, "rascal as you are, but to keep you from troubling the kingdom. You, who were put by me where you are, do you presume to talk about my troubling *you?* I will take care how you meddle again with such matters."

The chancellor devoured the insult in silence. On another day he had his satisfaction, when Lorraine said to him, "No one can tell to what religion you belong. You have only one religion that I know of, and that is to injure me and all my house. In this you are ungrateful to those who have made you what you are."

"Granting that you made me what I am," replied De l'Hôpital coolly, "was it the expectation of your eminence that I should sacrifice the interests of the king and kingdom in showing my gratitude to you?" A hard blow for the cardinal, adds the pope's legate.*

Coligny listened to the celebrated lawyer Charles du Moulin as he read the manuscript of a memoir on the council of Trent. "I prove," said the advocate, "that the council did not represent the whole Church; that it was altogether a popish caucus; that it was null and vicious in all its parts; that it contradicts former decrees and sets forth absurdities for our faith; that it will take the jewels out of the French crown and destroy the liberties of the French Church."†

"Publish the book," said Coligny, with an unusual eagerness of hope, for Du Moulin was not a Protestant. "It breaks down the walls which Rome is building around us."

* L'Etoile, Mémoires.

† The treatise is in the Mém. de Condé. Calvin wrote a book quite the same purpose, "Acts of the Council of Trent, with the Antidote."

The volume, damp from the press, was soon in the hands of the Sorbonnists, who read it with amazement and vengeance.

One morning the author was going up the steps of the Palace of Justice, when an officer arrested him. Other lawyers were indignant at such treatment of an eminent man, and they excited their clerks to rescue him. A tumult was likely to be raised. The archers hurried their prisoner to the Conciergerie, near at hand, and locked him in one of the cells.

"This touches me," said Coligny, on hearing of the arrest. "I make the case my own, for I advised the publication." He hastened to the queen, showed the probable results of such injustice, and obtained an order for the release of his friend. Shortly after, Du Moulin drew up a most violent paper against the Protestants. "The chief butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot him."

END OF VOLUME I.