

# ***THE MASSACRE OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW***

**'Where our Lord was Crucified'**

***From 'Two Eras of France'***

***Or***

**'TRUE STORIES FROM HISTORY'**

**By Hugh De Normand**

Auburn:

Alden, Beardsley & Co.

Rochester:

Wanzer, Beardsley & Co.

1854

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In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the  
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216 William St.

## **PREFACE:**

"But blackest in the black catalogue of crime, most horrible among the fiendish deeds of all the dreadful centuries, was the St. Bartholomew Massacre. The world still recalls with shuddering horror the scenes of that most cowardly and cruel onslaught. The king of France, urged on by Romish priests and prelates, lent his sanction to the dreadful work. The great bell of the palace, tolling at dead of night, was a signal for the slaughter. Protestants by thousands, sleeping quietly in their homes, trusting to the plighted honor of their king, were dragged forth without a warning, and murdered in cold blood." {GC88 272.1}

"A medal was struck to commemorate the glorious massacre; a picture, which still exists in the Vatican, was painted, representing the chief events of St. Bartholomew. The pope, eager to show his gratitude to Charles for his dutiful conduct, sent him the Golden Rose; and from the pulpits of Rome eloquent preachers celebrated Charles, Catherine, and the Guises as the new founders of the papal church." {GC88 272.3}

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# THE MASSACRE OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW

## 1. CATHERINE & CHARLES

**Isa 3:12 As for my people, ...women rule over them.**

THOUGH the throne of France has never been filled by a female, the Government of that country has perhaps been as frequently, and as thoroughly, for a time, what writers on the constitutions of States call a Gynocracy, as that of any other kingdom in Europe. Queens, queen mothers, and royal mistresses, have repeatedly proved too strong for the Salic Law; and without actually wearing on their brow " the round and top of sovereignty," have exercised, sometimes almost openly, its fullest prerogatives. At the period of which we are now about to speak-the year 1572 - the actual ruler of France was the celebrated Catherine de Medicis, the widow of Henry II., and the mother of the reigning king, Charles IX.

The spirit of ambition has rarely possessed any bosom more completely than it did that of this remarkable woman. Unrestrained either by religion or humanity-- despising alike the law of God and the opinion of man-she was well fitted to move forward in the pursuit of her purposes with the reckless and unshrinking audacity which their nature demanded, and to brook neither obstacle nor competition in her path. If she had one weak point of character, and was even more than the generality of her contemporaries the slave of the popular superstitions of her age, her deference to the imaginary intimations of the stars was in no degree calculated to withhold her from any really wicked course, although it might sometimes make her fly from dangers of its own creation. Indeed, in thus scaring her with merely visionary terrors, it was likely only to plunge her deeper into crime than she might otherwise have fallen. Of crimes of a certain character there is no other of the passions which is so fruitful a master as Fear.

Catherine, too, if not endowed in any surpassing degree with general talent, was an Italian not more in blood and lineage than in the subtlety and wiliness which have been supposed, in modern times, to characterize her countrymen; and young as she was, only fourteen, when she left her native land, she seems to have brought away with her from her earliest instructors no small share of that art of intrigue and skill in political stratagem, for which the minor courts of Italy had long been famous.

Charles himself inherited much of the ability of his mother; but this bad woman, with the view to secure the more completely her own domination, had taken pains to surround her son, from the moment he became king (which he did when only a child of ten years of age, by the death of his elder brother, Francis II.) with every seduction most suited to corrupt and enfeeble his mind, and to pervert the bounty of nature. She did not altogether succeed in this design; for, despite of his disadvantages of training, Charles, when he reached manhood, displayed decidedly superior talents, even of a literary kind as may be seen from some of his compositions, both in prose and verse, which are still extant. But the influences to which he was exposed seem to have nearly stifled whatever had been originally good in his moral nature, and to have operated with all the intended effect, in giving preternatural expansion and growth to the seeds it contained of vice and weakness. This victim of a mother's heartlessness and selfish ambition manifested, as he advanced in years, a character and disposition which fitted him to be partly that mother's instrument, and partly her coadjutor.

Catherine's resoluteness and stern inflexibility of purpose had degenerated in Charles into mere obstinacy and waywardness; and when she proceeded to her end with a cool, single-eyed, invincible determination, he was only headstrong, precipitate, and driven forward by the caprice of the moment, to be immediately driven back as far,

perhaps, by an opposite gust of temper or inclination. But, on the other hand, making allowance for his youth and comparative inexperience—for he was as yet only twenty-two—his capacity for perfidy and dissimulation was scarcely inferior to her own ; and his indifference to the sufferings of others, in the pursuit of his own gratifications, equally hardened. Without any of his mother's nerve, or as some may call it, strength of character, in treachery, in cruelty, in selfishness, in all that constituted the mere baseness of her nature, he was the worthy son of such a parent.

Such were the hands that held the royal authority. Meanwhile, the country was kept in a state of distraction, breaking out occasionally into open warfare, by the enmity of the two great religious parties into which the people were divided. At the head of the adherents of the ancient faith were the Duke of Guise and his brother, the Cardinal of Lorraine, who were nearly connected with the royal family by the marriage of their niece, Mary of Scotland, with the late King, Francis II. The chiefs of highest rank among the Huguenots, or Protestants, were the two young princes of the blood, Henry, King of Navarre, and the Prince of Condé.

The main stay of the party, however, and the individual who principally directed it, both by his councils and his popular influence, was the able, brave, and virtuous Coligny, or, as he was generally called in his own day, the Admiral of Chatillon. Of the mass of the population the immense majority were Papists, but still the Protestants formed also a very numerous and powerful body; and, although the recent battles of Jarnac and Montcontour, in both which they had been beaten by the King's brother, the Duke of Anjou, had for the present somewhat broken their strength, the energy natural to a new and aggressive party was not likely to allow them to remain long depressed under the effects of their disasters. The peace concluded in August, 1570,\* had put a stop, for the moment, to the active hostilities of the two parties, rather than united them, or composed their difficulties.

\* Called La paix boiteuse—the lame peace.

Affairs were in this state when the Queen-mother resolved to strike a bold and decisive blow for the consolidation of her authority. She had hitherto succeeded, by management, in preserving her position at the head of affairs, but the supremacy she was enabled to maintain was far from the full and unfettered dictatorship to which her ambition aspired. Mistress of the State as she was, she had yet been obliged to share too much of her power with those under whose protection, as it were, she held it, and who, by merely withdrawing their aid and support, could, at any moment they chose, leave her in the hands of another faction just as little disposed to allow her the exercise of an unparticipated sovereignty.

Tired of this imperfect and precarious sway, Catherine appears to have resolved upon the adoption of a new policy. Instead of longer employing the two hostile parties to balance each other, she now determined to avail herself of the assistance of the one to effect, once for all, the extermination and destruction of the other. In carrying this de and daring scheme into execution, she was influenced, moreover, by her religious opinions. Bigoted adherent of the Papacy, she was taught to believe that she would be doing God service by the destruction of the new faith. Intolerance and the spirit of persecution aided her political schemes, and she resolved to immolate the enemies of her faith to her ferocious and devouring ambition.

The occasion which Catherine determined to seize upon for "the perpetration of her diabolical design, was one singularly calculated to deepen the revolting character of the tragedy about to be enacted. To crown and consummate, as it was pretended, the reconciliation of the two religions, the Court had proposed that a marriage should take place between Charles' sister, Margaret, and Henry of Navarre. There is too much

reason to conclude that Catherine and her son had, from the first, suggested this union with no other object than that of drowning the day of its celebration in the blood of their unsuspecting subjects.

## **II.**

### ***The Judgments at Court and the Marriage***

**2Co 6:14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers:**

EVERY expedient was now resorted to in order to make the Protestants forget their ancient jealousy of the Court, and to lull them into reliance and security. The King himself undertook the management of Coligny; and the royal hypocrite plied his chosen task with a depth of art so much beyond his years, that he soon had the Admiral as completely within his toils as he could desire. Having invited him to court, Charles received him with a degree of distinction which had scarcely ever before been accorded to a subject; and not only restored him immediately to all his ancient dignities, but took him into his intimacy, consulted him on all affairs of State, seemed on every occasion to be more swayed by his advice than by that of any of his other counsellors, and in short, impressed him with a conviction that he had not a more attached friend than his young sovereign.

Coligny thus deceived, it was not wonderful that the great majority of the party who looked upon him as their head, should allow themselves to be caught in the same snare. The professions of the Court seem to have been almost universally relied upon as sincere; and when invitations to the royal marriage were sent to all the most distinguished Huguenot lords and gentlemen throughout France, few thought of declining to repair to Paris from any apprehension that their lives would be in danger on an occasion which, to them especially, was one of so much triumph and promise, and which was to be graced and sanctioned by the presence, in the quality of the King's confidant and advisor, of their most experienced and most venerated chief. Some, however, still retained their doubts and fears, and deemed it most prudent to remain at their homes.

One circumstance which alarmed the more suspicious, was the sudden death of Henry's mother, the Queen of Navarre, which occurred on the 9th of June, at the house of Guillart, Bishop of Chartres, in which she had taken up her abode on coming to Paris a few weeks before to assist in the preparations for her son's nuptials.

This lady was a person of distinguished ability and strength of character; and although the excitement in which men's minds were at that time, from the expectation of coming events, may have caused her death to pass over with less observation, it was afterwards very generally believed that she had been taken off by poison, perhaps from a fear on the part of the Court that her penetration, and the opportunities she enjoyed of mixing intimately with the royal circle, might enable her to detect or conjecture the meditated treachery.

As the day on which the marriage was to take place approached, the Huguenot gentlemen, and even numbers of the humbler orders who belonged to that party, flocked to Paris from all quarters; and by the middle of August the capital had collected within its walls nearly all the persons of consequence in France attached to the new faith.

On the evening of Sunday the seventeenth, the espousals of the royal pair were celebrated in the Louvre with becoming festivities; and on the following morning the marriage ceremony was performed on an elevated platform erected before the great Cathedral of Notre-Dame, in the presence of a splendid company, composed both of Papists and Protestants. After the performance of the ceremony, the bride and those of

the company who were of the Romish faith, advanced to the high altar to hear mass; while Henry, Admiral Coligny, and the rest of the Protestants, retired into the choir.

On leaving the church the party returned to the archbishop's palace, and there dined. In the evening, a supper and a masked ball again collected the revellers in the grand hall of the Louvre, although most of the Protestants were restrained, by the severity of their religious notions, from attending this conclusion of the day's festivities. Coligny himself was absent under the pretext of a slight indisposition.

The next day, the nineteenth, was devoted to repose by the King and his exhausted guests; but on the evening of Wednesday, the twentieth, the hilarities of the Court were renewed by a very extraordinary entertainment given in the Hotel de Bourbon. On this occasion, a theatrical show or mask was exhibited to the company, which actually pictured out, with daring distinctness, the horrible tragedy that was so soon to follow. The chronicles of the time\* describe this exhibition minutely, and from their descriptions it would seem to have been easy to conjecture what were the thoughts of the King, and his secret counsellors, in the midst of all these scenes of, festive abandonment. It is true that such a rehearsal of the intended massacre was unnecessary for the execution of the design, and might even seem fraught with some risk of preventing its success; but the projectors of great crimes have often shown this wild propensity to sport with the chances of detection, by venturing to the very brink of a disclosure of their plans.

\* Memoires de l'Etat de la France, sons Charles IX.

Even before this dark and shadowy hint of the designs of the Court, various circumstances had troubled the confidence of the Protestants. So little care had their enemies taken to conceal their hostile intentions, that rumors of some terrible blow about to be struck were general among the populace, and had, in several instances, met the ears of the devoted Huguenots. Obscure, but earnest, intimations of impending danger had even been communicated to particular individuals by their Romish friends.

The uneasiness and apprehension thus created were increased to the greatest degree of alarm, when at last a body of twelve hundred soldiers made their appearance in the city, and were seen, after being marched through the streets, to take up their stations under arms, in the vicinity of the palace, the arsenal, and other strongholds. Several Protestant lords and gentlemen, on witnessing the entry of these troops, secretly withdrew themselves from the city; and even Coligny himself was induced, on the morning of the twentieth, to seek the royal presence, and to request an explanation from his Majesty of a circumstance which had so greatly excited the fears of his friends.

The Admiral was received by his sovereign with so much kindness, and such warm assurances of protection, that long before the close of their interview, whatever suspicions he had at first been inclined to entertain were completely dissipated. So far did Charles carry his dissimulation, that he declared he had ordered the troops into the city for the express purpose of placing them as guards, in the excited state of the public feeling, around the houses of the Huguenots, to protect them from designs which he suspected to be entertained against them by their old enemies, the Guises.

To enable him the more securely to attain this object, he suggested that all the principal persons of the reformed religion should be immediately collected from the different parts of the town, and lodged together in the neighborhood of the palace. Coligny, completely reassured by all this show of friendship, returned to his house, where he was soon after sought by many of his followers, anxious to consult with him on the circumstances in which they were placed.

Retiring to his apartment, he left his son-in-law, Teligny,\* to receive his visitors; and with such encouraging animation did this ardent young man describe to them the conversation which the Admiral had just had with his Majesty, that most of them left the house convinced of the groundlessness of their fears, and having their doubts of their sovereign's honor converted into gratitude for his provident watchfulness over their safety.

\*Charles, Lord of Teligny in Rovergne, had, a few months before this, espoused Louisa de Coligny, the daughter of the Admiral. This lady afterwards married William of Nassau, Prince of orange, the founder of the Republic of Holland.

The strange allegorical pastime with which the guests of the palace had amused themselves on the evening of the 20th, again awakened the misgivings of some, and on the following day Coligny repaired to the Queen-mother, to inform her of the dissatisfaction which these extraordinary revels had occasioned. Catherine affected to laugh at his alarm. "Mon dieu! Admiral," she exclaimed, "give yourself no further uneasiness about these festivities of ours,—leave us to make merry in our own way, and in the course of four days, on the faith of a Queen, I promise you that you and those of your religion shall have such proofs of my regard as shall satisfy your utmost desires,"

She kept her word!

### **III.**

#### ***Attempted Assassination***

**Dan 11:34 ... but many shall cleave to them with flatteries.**

THE seeming frankness of the assurances of Queen Catherine appears again to have allayed all suspicion; and notwithstanding the successive warnings, as we may almost call them, which they had received of the destruction preparing for them, the devoted victims remained in tranquility under the descending stroke of their oppressors.

But the conspirators were now about to proceed to a more daring act than anything they had yet ventured upon. It was resolved to assassinate the admiral. In the obscurity which hangs over much of the interior mechanism of these dark transactions, we are left almost to mere conjecture regard to the motives which may have prompted the contrivers of the plot to preface their work of general slaughter, by this attack on the life of an individual. Perhaps they had become afraid, from the repeated occasions on which Coligny had evinced some suspicion of the intentions of the Court, that he had his eye upon them too watchfully, and might yet defeat their plans unless he were instantly got rid of.

Or they may have calculated that such an incident as the murder of their chief in open day was the most likely of all things to strike the whole body of the Protestants with consternation, and, by the terror and confusion into which it threw them, to prepare them the more certainly for falling a prey, when their destroyers should be let loose upon them. It may have even been expected that this act of treachery would perchance precipitate them, in the first fury of their indignation, into some course of violence or aggression, such as might afford a seeming justification for the meditated massacre. At all events, if, as it seems likely, the assassination of Coligny was the project of the heads, or most determined partners of the conspiracy, a stroke well-contrived, by its tendency to bring matters to extremities, to fix their less resolute confederates, and nerve them to enter with decision upon that line of action to which they might not otherwise have been easily brought to make up their minds.

There were appearances of vacillation—whether arising from fear, or some more creditable feeling—on the part of Charles himself, before his mother and her more intimate coadjutors had found means to fix his resolution, by persuading him that matters had now come to such a pass that, if he should delay attacking the Huguenots, they would assuredly rise and destroy him, and that the question was simply whether they should perish, or himself and a vast multitude of his other subjects.

But to return to our story. Towards eleven o'clock on the morning of the 22d, which was Friday, the Admiral, after having spent some time in the Louvre with the king's brother, the Duke of Anjou, who had sent for him—was returning on foot to his hotel to dinner, when he met the King coming out of a chapel which stood opposite to the palace. They walked together to the tennis court of the palace, where, finding the Duke of Guise and Teligny, Charles and the former engaged in a game against the latter and another gentleman. After having stood by for a short time, Coligny took his leave, followed by about a dozen lords and gentlemen of his party, and proceeded on his way home.

He had not advanced more than a hundred paces, when as he was moving leisurely along, engaged in reading a paper which some one had presented to him, he was suddenly struck by two balls from an arquebuse, one of which carried away the forefinger of his right hand, while the other wounded him more severely in his left arm. He immediately dropped the paper he held, and fell into the arms of his friends who were near him. The shot had come from the right, and looking up in that direction, the Admiral pointed out at once to those who were with him, the window from which it had been fired.

The house was that of the Canon Pierre de Pille de Villemur, who had formerly been preceptor to the Duke of Guise. It stood contiguous to the cloister of a church, into which there was an opening by a back door. The window at which the assassin had taken his station was darkened by an iron trellis. Several of Coligny's followers immediately proceeded to the house, and forced their way into it, but when they reached the apartment from which the assassin had taken aim, they found only the arquebuse remaining where he had rested it on the window. He, himself, as it afterwards appeared, had made his escape through the cloister of the church, to a horse which stood ready saddled for him on the bank of the river, and on which he was soon after seen riding from the city at full speed.\*

\*His name was Maurevel, or Maurevert, a creature of the Duke of Guise, in whose service this is said not to have been his first exploit of a similar character.

Meanwhile Coligny had been carried home by his friends and placed in bed. The news of the attack that had been made upon his life spread rapidly over the city, and the Protestants flocked in crowds to his house. Among others the celebrated surgeon, Ambrose Pere, was quickly in attendance, and proceeded to dress the wounds of the old man, and to extract the ball, while a numerous circle of his friends stood around, watching the process with intense solicitude.

But we must omit all further description of this scene, and return for a moment to the tennis-court, where the King was at play. That part of the street where the Admiral was when he was fired at, was so near the palace, that the report of the arquebuse, ringing through the tennis-court, startled his majesty and those who were with him, and the next minute some one running into the palace from the street, informed them what had happened. There is no good reason to suppose that Charles had been intrusted by his mother with her plan of assassinating the Admiral. She seems rather, as we have already observed, to have determined upon 'the perpetration of the crime principally for the purpose of steadying the wavering resolution of son, by producing a state of circumstances, which he should imagine it impossible for him to draw back in his design.



When Charles, therefore, was now told of the daring outrage which had been committed almost within the precincts of his palace, his instant emotion was that of furious indignation. Throwing down his racket, he rushed into the palace, declaring that he would be avenged on the bold ruffian who had thus broken the laws and insulted his authority. He had not been long in his apartment when the King of Navarre and the Prince of Condo sought his presence, having just come from the house of their wounded friend. To their vehement suit for justice on the authors of the assassination he replied, with the most terrific oaths, that the Admiral's blood should be amply atoned for. His mother, and the Duke of Anjou, who were also present, deemed it prudent in the meantime, to counterfeit the same indignation, and to join in the King's assurances, that nothing would be left undone to detect the perpetrators of so heinous an atrocity.

Soon after this Teligny presented himself, bringing a request to Charles from his father-in-law, that he would deign to pay him a visit at his hotel, as he had some matters to communicate to him which he was unwilling to confide to any other ear. With this petition the King promised to comply, and about two o'clock Charles set out to make his promised visit, accompanied by his mother, his brothers, and a retinue composed of several of the most distinguished members of the Court, among whom were the Marshal de Tavannes, the Count de Retz, and the Duke de Nevers, all principal confidants of Catherine, and confederated with her in her scheme for the massacre of the Protestants.

When they reached the house, they were ushered into the apartment where Coligny was, surrounded by many of his friends, among whom were the King of Navarre, the Prince of Condé, and other individuals of rank. Charles and his mother having taken their seats by his bed-side, the wounded man entered into conversation with them. In a long discourse which he addressed to the King, he began by taking God to witness, that in all his actions he had never had any other object in view except the good of his country, and his sovereign's true honor, declaring that he was ready to render an account of his conduct to his Maker, if it should be His will now to take him to Himself.

Passing from that topic, he proceeded to urge upon his Majesty the duty of doing something to check the growing ascendancy of Spain, or at least of so ordering matters that the Duke of Alba should no longer be immediately informed, by means of his salaried spies, of whatever took place in the council of the King of France. But the subject to which he besought the King's attention with the greatest earnestness, was the necessity, if he wished to preserve the tranquility of the kingdom, of his giving orders that the different edicts which had been published for the protection of the adherents of the reformed faith, and especially the articles of the recent peace, should be more strictly maintained.

Charles replied in somewhat guarded terms. He expressed his conviction of the Admiral's loyalty and patriotism, and added that it had ever been his wish to observe religiously his compact with his Protestant subjects, and that such was still his determination. He then professed to feel anxious that Coligny, in his weak state, should not agitate himself by any further exertion; and, adverting to his wound, declared, with an oath, that he would punish the crime that had been committed in such a manner that the memory of his revenge should never be forgotten.

The conversation continued for a short time longer, when it was proposed by the Count de Retz that Coligny should be removed to the palace, where the Queen of Navarre would willingly give up her apartment to his use. This, however, was opposed by Mazille, the physician in attendance, who stated that a removal would be attended with danger to his patient. The royal party remained to see the wounds dressed, when Charles, taking up one of the bandages that was steeped in blood, looked at it with every appearance of reverential concern, and then handed it to his mother. The ball which had

been extracted from the Admiral's arm, was also examined by both. They then took their departure, and hurried back to the Louvre.

On arriving at the palace, Charles, Catherine, the Duke of Anjou, and their chief advisers, remained for some time in secret consultation ; after which the King was busily engaged in giving orders and making up despatches, with which couriers were sent off to the provinces in rapid succession.

#### **IV.**

### ***The Massacre Begins***

**Re 11:8 ... the great city, ...where also our Lord was crucified.**

ON the following day, the 23d, the municipal functionaries of the different quarters of the city were employed in going through the streets of their several districts, and taking down the names of the Protestants, professedly with the object of having as many of them as possible removed to the neighborhood of the Louvre, for their greater safety.

Accordingly, a great number of the principal lords and gentlemen of the party were accommodated with lodgings immediately around the hotel of the Admiral; those who resided in the different houses giving up their apartments to these new tenants. A guard of fifty soldiers was also stationed around Coligny's hotel, for the protection, as it was pretended, of himself and friends; but some surprise and apprehension was felt at its being put under the command of Cosseius, a well-known minion of the Queen-mother, and an old enemy of the Admiral's. Cosseius and his men seem to have repaired to their post towards nightfall; and at the same time other detachments of military were placed around the palace, along the bank of the river, and at other stations in the same neighborhood.

These arrangements appear to have been determined upon at a final consultation which had been held in the earlier part of the day, in the garden of the Tuileries, by Catherine, the King, the Duke of Anjou, the Marshal de Tavannes, and the other chiefs of the conspiracy. It is said to have been on this occasion that Catharine first proposed to her son the immediate execution of "the design which had been so long in preparation, urging upon him with especial earnestness the favorable circumstances in which the attempt might be made while the Admiral was confined to his bed, and the minds of his followers perplexed by anxiety on his account.

Her employment of this language would give countenance to the supposition that the assassination of Coligny had been designed to bring about the state of things which she now described, or at least to aid her in overcoming the irresolution of Charles, by enabling her to assert that such a result had followed from it.

The scheme which she proposed for the massacre was of the most sanguinary and comprehensive description, involving the destruction of the King of Navarre, and the Prince of Condé, as well as all of their followers. The arguments of another member of the confederacy, however, succeeded in determining the King to spare the two young princes, on condition of their consenting to embrace the Roman Catholic faith.

It was their own persons only, however, which it was agreed to respect. It was resolved that, although untouched themselves, they should have their full share in the terrors of the coming slaughter, by beholding it raging, in its direst fury, close around them. With this view, Charles, under pretence of a fear which he professed to entertain

of some attempt upon their lives about to be made by the Guises, invited them to assemble the principal gentlemen of their suites for that night at the Louvre, and to have them lodged around their own apartments. This seemingly friendly counsel was accepted and acted upon; and by ten o'clock the two princes had retired to their respective chambers, while the most faithful of their attendants occupied the adjoining rooms, unarmed, and secure, as they imagined, from all violence, under the pledged honor, and in the fortified and guarded residence, of their sovereign.

After the military had been disposed in the manner that has been already described, the Duke of Guise assembled the principal officers of the different corps, and stated to them, in a short address, the nature of the service in which they were about to be engaged. At the same time, Charron, the Provost of the Merchants, in conformity with the instructions he had received, having collected the captains and lieutenants of the city night guard in the great hall of the Hotel de Ville, prepared them in like manner for taking their part in the massacre.

The signal, it was intimated, for the commencement of the bloody work, would be given towards the break of day, from the clock of the Palais de Justice—immediately on hearing which they would break into the houses where the Protestants were lodged in all the different parts of the city, and proceed to slaughter the inmates, without regard to age or sex.

The doors of these devoted dwellings had already been marked with white crosses. The assassins, also, that they might know each other when they met, were commanded to wrap each a white scarf around his left arm, and to place a cross of the same color in his hat. These badges, after the massacre had begun, seem to have been generally adopted by the Romish population, both as a means of mutual recognition, and as tokens of the right of those who bore them to walk unharmed amidst the bloody storm that raged through the inhospitable and treacherous city.

Such, then, was the state of things at the Louvre, and in the neighborhood of that royal castle, in the earlier part of the night of the 23d of August, 1572. Most of the persons of note among the Huguenots, to the number of several hundred, were lodged in the streets near the palace. The Admiral of Chatillon lay ill of his wound in his hotel, where his son-in-law, Teligny, and several others of his more intimate friends, also resided.

The King of Navarre and the Prince of Condé were asleep in their apartments in the Louvre, with the principal gentlemen attached to their persons assembled around them, under cover of the same roof. Many Protestants who had not found accommodation in this quarter, were dispersed over the other parts of the city; and in the Faubourg St. Germain especially, on the other side of the river, the persons of rank of that party were collected together in considerable numbers. With few exceptions, all these individuals, though well aware that they dwelt in the midst of a hostile population, believed that they were in the meantime secure under the protection of their king; and, trusting to the arrangements which he had made professedly for their safety, had retired to take their repose, unarmed, and fearing no evil.

On the other hand, among their enemies all was active preparation for the great blow that was about to be struck. Already had the armed bands, who were to commence the massacre, received their instructions and been drawn up around the dwellings of their unsuspecting victims. Parties of the king's troops and of the city guard were planted at the Louvre, in front of the residence of Coligny, and at different stations in the streets, and along the bank of the river, as far east as the arsenal, all under the command of minions of Guise or of the Court. Throughout the town the houses, tenanted by Protestants, were all marked by white crosses on the doors.

Meanwhile the different chiefs of the conspiracy were busily employed, some in riding from post to post, to see that the arrangements for the attack were complete, or to convey new orders from the Louvre;—others assisting at the consultations which continued to be held by Catherine, Charles, and their associates, within that central seat of the bloody design, in which the preparations for it had been contrived and thus far brought to maturity, and where the match was now about to be applied to that well-laid train, in the explosion of which so many thousands of helpless and innocent human beings were miserably to perish.

As the night advanced, however, the tranquility to which the Protestants had resigned themselves, gave place, among some of them, to considerable perplexity and alarm. The different movements which were going on in the neighborhood of the palace—the frequent opening and shutting of the gates, as couriers departed to, or arrived from, the several parts of the city with which it was necessary to be in communication—the introduction of quantities of arms into that stronghold—the constant passing of horsemen and pedestrians bearing torches along the streets—and all the increasing bustle unavoidably attendant upon the eve of so terrible an enterprise, had awakened from their sleep many of those who were lodged in the quarter principally disturbed by these noises.

Rising from their beds they left their houses and proceeded to the Louvre, in order, if possible, to ascertain the meaning of such unusual commotion. On addressing their inquiries to the soldiers whom they found stationed around the palace, they were informed that the whole was occasioned merely by the preparations for a nocturnal fete which the Court was about to give. This answer was ambiguous rather than literally false.

Meanwhile it would appear that Catherine had not yet succeeded in working up the froward and irresolute temper of her son to the pitch of daring at which he would venture actually to give orders for commencing the massacre. It seems to have been originally intended that the signal for the murderers to fall upon their prey should sound from the city, immediately before daybreak, or about half-past two in the morning. But the undecided state of the King's mind determined Catherine to take advantage of a moment of excitement in which he had been prevailed upon to express his consent that they should proceed with the business, and to order the tocsin to be rung immediately from the steeple of the adjacent Church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois. This was about midnight.

As the bell flung its sounds of omen over the city and its suburbs, the people everywhere started from their slumbers. The windows of the Louvre, the Tuileries, and of many other public buildings and private residences, were lighted up with all haste. The tenants of other houses, following these examples, the town was speedily illuminated in every part. Some time further, however, seems to have been spent in preparation on one side, and perplexity, terror, and confusion on the other, before the slaughter was begun. The agents commissioned to execute the plot were now all in motion. The order for striking the blow had gone forth and could not be recalled. Catherine's purpose was attained; now that she had contrived to have the King committed to the terrible work. At half-past two, just as the dawn began to appear, the massacre began. The infuriated soldiery, the abandoned bigot of the Papacy, the man who had his private malice to seek revenge, all mingled in that awful hour, in the work of death.

## V

### *The Murder of Coligny*

**Ps 41:9 Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.**

COSSEINS, as already mentioned, commanded the guard stationed in front of the Admiral's house. Seeing the Duke of Guise approaching at the head of a body of armed men, he immediately proceeded to make the dispositions already concerted between them. He first placed five or six soldiers opposite to each window of the house, that they might be ready to fire upon any one who should attempt to make his escape.

He then knocked with violence at the gate of the court. This brought down the person who kept the keys, and who, on being informed that admission was desired to the Admiral by a messenger from the King, immediately opened the gate. Cosseins instantly fell upon the man, and despatched him by repeated strokes of his dagger. He then, followed by his men, forced his way into the Court. The attendants, in their alarm and consternation, after a brief and ineffectual resistance, took refuge within the house, the door of which they shut.

By this time all the inmates were aroused; and means were forthwith taken to barricade the door, by bringing down the heaviest articles of furniture and placing them behind it. But these impediments did not long withstand the fury of the assailants. Having forced their way into the house, they rushed up the stairs to the rooms where the Admiral and his friends were. Coligny himself had already risen from the bed, and, seeing that all chance of defence was gone, had desired his friends to leave him, and to hasten, if it were yet possible, to secure their own safety by flight. On this all who were in the apartment withdrew except a servant named Nicholas Muss; and ascending to the upper part of the house, they got out by a window on the roof. Very few of them, however, effected their escape. The greater number were slain in the adjacent house, through which they endeavored to gain the street.

Meanwhile Cosseins, accompanied by a German of the name of Beme, one of the servants of the Duke of Guise, and several other persons, suddenly rushed, with their drawn swords in their hands, into the room where Coligny was. The old man looked on them with an unmoved countenance.

"Are you not the Admiral?" cried Beme, extending his sword towards him.

"I am," he replied calmly; and then fixing his eye upon the naked blade with which he was menaced, he added, "Young man, you ought to have respected my age and my infirmity; but you will only shorten my life by a few days or hours. Yet I could have wished"—he continued, after a momentary pause, with the feelings natural to a soldier—"I could have wished that I were to perish by the hand of a man, and not of this menial."

Beme then, uttering an oath, first thrust his sword into his breast, and afterwards struck him with it repeatedly on the head. At the same time the rest assailed him with like ferocity, till he fell down dead upon the floor. The voice of the Duke of Guise was now heard from below, inquiring if the deed were done? On being answered in the affirmative, he ordered them to throw the dead body from the window, that he might see with his own eyes whether or not it was really the Admiral they had slain. At first, when he looked on the hacked and blood-besmeared carcass, he could scarcely recognize it. But having bent down over it, and with his own hand wiped the face with a cloth, he exclaimed, "Yes, I know it; it is he himself." He then spurned it with his foot, and calling to his men, led them out of the court.

As soon as the soldiers of the Duke had left the Admiral's hotel, a party of the populace, hearing the tocsin ringing from the bell of the Palais de Justice, rushed into the street, and were soon collected in a tumultuous throng around and within the court and mansion which had just been the scene of such sanguinary atrocities. Having found, among the slain, the mangled body of Coligny, they gathered round it with eager curiosity, and vied with each other in heaping mockery and outrage on the senseless clay.

Not satisfied with the disfigurement already inflicted upon it by those who had deprived it of life, they proceeded to hack and mutilate it till the gory mass scarcely retained a trace of humanity. One man cut off the head, and bearing it away with him, presented it to Charles and his mother, by whom, after being embalmed, it was sent to the Pope at Rome, or as other authorities assert, to Philip II of Spain.

Other monsters, imitating this example, tore off the hands, and the feet, and the ears. Afterwards the trunk was kicked and dragged about in the mire of the streets by one band of blood-stained revellers after another, for three days. It was at last taken to the gibbet at Montfaucon, and there this venerable nobleman's remains, naked, mutilated, and besmeared with all manner of defilement, swung in their iron chain from the gallows-tree.

Charles and his mother, attended by a numerous suite, came to view the hideous spectacle. As the King gazed on it, one of his courtiers, who accompanied him, remarked that the smell was offensive. "The body of a dead enemy," replied Charles, repeating the expression of Vitellius at Cremona-"always smells sweet."

## VI

### ***The Massacre Goes On***

**Da 11:33 ...yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days.**

WHILE the Admiral Coligny was thus being the victim of bigoted and infuriated hate, the blood of the devoted Huguenots was flowing with no less profusion at the Louvre, under the eyes of the King himself. Nançay, the Captain of the Guards, having repaired, with a party of his men, to the chambers occupied by the attendants of the King of Navarre and the Prince of Condé, fell upon their victims before they had time to think of defence. They took from them what arms they happened to have in their possession, and then leading them down to the court in front of the palace, they slew them deliberately, one by one, while Charles looked on from the window, and urged them to take care that none escaped.

It was impossible, however, that such a massacre could be effected without much noise and disorder, cut off, even as the sufferers were, from all help or means of resistance. The palace seems to have been filled with confusion and terror.

Henry's newly-married Queen, Margaret, has given us, in her memoirs, an account of so much of the frightful tragedy as fell under her own observation. While she lay asleep in her own apartment, which was near that of her husband, she was awakened by some one knocking at the door, and crying out "Navarre! Navarre! ." Her servant, thinking it was her husband, King Henry, quickly ran to the door. On opening it, a gentleman rushed in, bleeding from wounds in different parts of his person, and pursued by soldiers. As they did not hesitate to follow him into the chamber, he, seeking a place of refuge, threw himself on the bed where Margaret lay. Feeling herself caught hold of by the man, she sprang from the bed to the floor, where he fell with her,

continuing to cling to her. She knew not whether the soldiers were seeking her life or his, and she was extremely agitated. At length Nançay, the Captain of the Guards, made his appearance and released her. He reproved the men for their violence, ordered them to leave the apartment, and granted to Margaret's entreaties the life of the poor man who had sought refuge in her apartments.

Margaret was then conducted into the apartments of her sister, Madame of Lorraine. As she was entering the ante-chamber, a gentleman, pursued by soldiers, was pierced by a halberd within a few feet of her. At this sight she fainted. Nançay had already informed her of what was going on, and assured her that her husband was in safety beside the King.

In truth Henry and the Prince of Condz had already been conducted to Charles, and received by him in a room where he sat in company with the chief contrivers of the massacre. As soon as they presented themselves he addressed them at some length, and after enumerating the various causes of complaint he conceived himself to have against the party to which they had belonged, he concluded by announcing to them that they must either consent immediately to change their religion, or prepare to undergo the fate which they had seen inflicted on so many of their friends.

In reply the two young princes ventured to remind their royal kinsman of the promises and assurances by which he had drawn them to his Court, and the other considerations entitling them to have their opinions respected, and their lives preserved. Their remonstrances were in vain. The utmost they could obtain was a respite of three days, before the termination of which they consented to go to mass, and thus escaped death, though they did not recover their liberty.

While these events were taking place, the alarmbell sounded from the Palais de Justice. This was the signal for all the subordinate agents of the conspiracy in the different parts of the town to commence operations. Tavannes, and several of his associates, immediately appeared on horseback in the streets, and riding about in all directions, called out to the people to kill the Huguenots, telling them that such was the command of the King, who desired that not a single heretic should be suffered to escape.

From this moment the slaughter was universal and indiscriminate. Inflamed with the wildest fury of religious hatred, to which, in many cases, fear, revenge, and other malignant passions added double force, the multitude set no bounds to their ferocity and cruelty. Persons of both sexes and of all ages equally fell victims to their un pitying rage. Every house supposed to be tenanted by persons of the obnoxious religion was broken into. The inmates sometimes attempted to fly or to hide themselves, but rarely offered any resistance. It was all headlong fury on one side, and astonishment and consternation on the other.

Nor were all those who perished Protestants. Many took advantage of the confusion of this popular tempest to satiate their private and personal enmities, and to wreak on a brother of the same faith the hoarded hatred of years. All the worst passions of the human heart were let loose; but their one wild cry was blood! blood!

On that terrible Sabbath,\* blood reeked from the principal streets of Paris, as from a field of battle. The bodies of the slaughtered, of men, of women, of children, of infants, were heaped together into carts, and so carried down and thrown into the river, in which they might be seen everywhere floating and tumbling, while its waters were turned red by the blood that flowed from them. The general description which de Thou gives us of the horrors of the scene, is exceedingly striking.

\*St. Bartholomew's Day, August 24th, fell on Sunday.

"The people," he says, "incited against their fellow countrymen by the captains and lieutenants of the city guard, who were flying about in all directions, rioted in the phrenzy of a boundless license, and all things wore an aspect of woe and affright. The streets resounded with the uproar of the crowds rushing on to slaughter and plunder, while ever and anon the lamenting cries of persons dying or in peril, met the ear, or the carcasses of those who had been murdered were seen tossed forth from the windows of their dwellings. The courts, and even the inner apartments of many houses, were filled with the slain; dead bodies were rolled or dragged along the mire of the highways; the bloody puddle overflowed the kennels, and ran down, in different places, to the river; an innumerable multitude perished, not only of men, but of women and children."\*

\*Thuani Historia, vol. iii.

## VII.

### *Individual Victims.*

**Mr 13:12 Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.**

IN the contemporary history of the times, we have many individual pictures of suffering and outrage of the most atrocious character. From these we select a few, in order to convey a clearer idea of the horrors of this infamous massacre.

The attendants of Coligny and the Protestant gentlemen who resided in his house, fled—as before stated—by a window in the roof. A few of them succeeded, by this means, to elude their pursuers, for a time. Among these was the young Teligny, recently married to the daughter of the Admiral—a gentleman of distinguished qualifications, and universally regarded by his party with the warmest attachment. He had been observed making his way along the roof of a house by several persons belonging to the Court. But, although he was one of those whom they had been particularly charged not to allow to escape, they could not find it in their heart to kill him, so much beloved was he by all to whom he was known.

He was afterwards discovered by some soldiers in a garret, and even they, upon learning his name, went away, and left him unharmed. But some other soldiers, belonging to the guard of the Duke of Anjou, coming shortly after to the place where he was hid, despatched him and several persons of the Admiral's suite who were with him. This they did, it is said, at the command of their captain,—a person who had been, heretofore, the familiar friend of Teligny. But all such connections between those not professing the same faith, were now broken and forgotten.

Among others who perished was Peter Ramus, one of the most intrepid spirits of modern times, and whose whole life nearly had been as stormy as its termination was now miserable. He was, at this time, Professor of Philosophy and Eloquence in the College of Presles, which stood in the south-eastern quarter of the city. He had held this dignity for more than twenty years, although the civil commotions by which the kingdom had so long been agitated had frequently compelled him to retire for a season from the performance of his duties. He had, however, returned to Paris, and to his academic sanctuary, on the general pacification of 1570.

Being a zealous opponent not only of the ancient religion, but likewise of the philosophy which had long reigned in the schools, he was regarded with peculiar enmity by the adherents of the prevailing faith. It is said that the murderers were sent to his



college, within which he had concealed himself, by one Jacques Charpentier, his personal enemy. Being found by them, he offered to purchase his life by the payment of a considerable sum of money. Nevertheless, he was massacred, and thrown from the window of a high chamber to the ground; after which they dragged him along the streets, the body being all the while scourged by some scholars, spurred on by their masters to this indignity.

Although, as has been said, the victims in general made scarcely any attempt even to defend themselves, still several instances occurred in which the person attacked did not fall before he had maintained a severe struggle with his assailants. Among others was the *Sieur de Guerchy*, who, wrapping his mantle round his arm, fought with his sword, the only weapon he had, till he sunk under the blows that fell upon him from all sides.

*Tavervy*, also, a lieutenant of the *Patrole*, when the blood-thirsty mob attacked his house, defended himself, by the assistance of one of his soldiers, with great bravery, as long as his ammunition lasted. He was at last, however, overpowered. Being killed, and his furniture and jewels carried off, the soldiers seized upon his sister who was in bed, sick and at the point of death, and dragged her naked through the streets, until she breathed her last under their torturing hands.

But we cannot afford space for any more of these horrid relations. Of the persons massacred, the greater number were killed with daggers and poniards. These were treated with least cruelty.

Many of those who met death otherwise were cruelly tortured-mutilated of their limbs, mocked and outraged by torments still sharper than the points of the swords with which they were pierced. Several old men being seized and brought down to the river, were first knocked on the head against the stones of the quay, and then thrown half dead into the water.

In one of the streets a number of boys of nine or ten years of age were seen dragging about an infant yet in swaddling clothes, by a rope tied round its neck. Another little child, on being laid hold of, began to laugh and to play with the beard of the stranger in whose arms it found itself. But the monster, untouched by its simple innocence, thrust his dagger into its bosom, and then tossed it from him into the river.

"The paper would weep"—says the chronicler—"if I were to recite the horrible blasphemies which were uttered by these monsters and incarnate devils during the fury of so many slaughters. The uproar, the continual sound of arquebuses and pistols, the lamentable and affrighting cries of those in agony, the vociferations of the murderers, the dead bodies thrown from the windows, or dragged through the mire with strange hootings and hissings, the stones which were thrown against them, and the pillaging of more than six hundred houses—all this, long continued, could only present to the eyes of the reader a perpetual image of extreme misery in all its forms.\*

*Memoires de l'Estat*, i. 313.

By the fortunate mismanagement of the person charged with the conduct of the massacre in the *Faubourg St. Germain*, the greater number of Protestants lodged in that quarter of the city were providentially enabled to effect their escape. Among these were the *Sieur de Fontenay*, the *Vidame of Chatres*, the *Count of Montgomery*, and many other noblemen and gentlemen of distinction.

They first received intelligence of what was going forward on the other side of the river, about five o'clock in the morning, when a man, who had come across in a boat, brought there the accounts of the extraordinary state in which the town was. Disbelieving the assertion of their informer that the atrocities which he reported were perpetrated by

the order of the King, and convinced that his Majesty himself must be in danger from the authors of the massacre of their Protestant brethren, many of them were on the point of proceeding across the river with the intention of lending their aid to protect the royal person and authority. But they soon had reason to repent their rashness. While about to step into the boats they saw approaching them from the opposite side, about two hundred soldiers of the King's Guard, who immediately discharged upon them a volley of musketry. Looking up they beheld Charles himself at the window of the Hotel de Bourbon, not only encouraging the soldiers, but joining them in the attack. He was firing as fast as the guns could be handed to him, and calling out to the men below, with passionate imprecations, to make all haste, as the Huguenots were already taking flight.

On observing this they lost not a moment in attempting their escape; and some on foot, some on horseback, though many of those who were mounted were without boots or spurs, they fled in all directions, no one thinking of saving anything else but his life. The soldiers rushing into their houses, pillaged them of whatever they contained, and massacred, at the same time, many of the inhabitants who had not time to make their escape.

The slaughter continued without intermission till five o'clock in the afternoon, when proclamation was made by sound of trumpet in the King's name, commanding all the citizens to retire to their houses. But at an early hour on the following morning, the populace, refreshed by their few hours of rest, recommenced their bloody work.

During the whole of that day and the next, the butchery of the unhappy Huguenots was carried on with undiminished ferocity, the infuriated rabble only stopping at last when they could find no more victims to destroy.

Meanwhile the couriers which had been despatched to the provinces with letters from the King to the several governors, had advertised them of what was passing in the capital, and directed them to follow the same course with regard to the persons belonging to the obnoxious faith in the principal towns of their respective districts. The consequence was that the same melancholy scenes which had been acted in Paris were repeated in many parts of France. At Meaux, at Troyes, at Orleans, at Bourges, at Lyons, at Toulouse, at Rouen, at Bordeaux, and in various other places, the mob, encouraged and assisted by the authorities, committed the wildest excesses of bloodshed and spoliation.

After the massacre was over, it became the object of the Court, in order to rid itself of the odium attaching to so foul a treachery, to make it appear that the blood which had flowed so profusely, had been shed only in self-defence, inasmuch as a conspiracy of the Huguenots had been, in fact, on the eve of breaking out, when its authors were thus suddenly overpowered and destroyed. The papers of Coligny had been examined in vain for anything which could be brought forward as affording even a shadow of proof of this pretended plot.

Another expedient was, therefore, resorted to. Two eminent individuals of the Protestant party, Cavagnes, a counsellor of the Parliament of Toulouse, and Briquemaut, a retired military officer of rank, both persons of venerable age, having been thrown into prison during the massacre, were brought to trial on the charge of having been implicated with the Admiral in the treason for which he suffered death.

The judges before whom they were brought in the first instance, finding that no evidence was produced against them except the assertions of their accusers, had the courage to refuse to declare them guilty. A more compliant tribunal, however, was subsequently found. After an unsuccessful attempt had been made to seduce them into a confession, by a promise that their lives should be saved, sentence of death, confiscation of goods, and attainder was pronounced against them.

They were accordingly dragged on hurdles from the prison of the Conciergerie to the Place de Greve, and there hanged. These unfortunate persons had been well known to Charles, who had been wont to make them many professions of his favor and respect. Both he and his mother, however, chose to regale their eyes with the sight of the agonies of the dying men. For this purpose the King left the bedside of his young consort, the beautiful and admirable Elizabeth of Austria, who had that morning presented him with a daughter, the first fruit of their union, and also the last. Having arrived at an early hour in the evening at the Hotel de Ville, the royal guests sat down to a sumptuous repast in the great hall of that building, the windows of which overlooked the place of execution.

That the party might have time to enjoy the preliminary entertainment provided for them, the performance of the fatal ceremony was delayed till ten o'clock, although the gray-haired prisoners, sitting bound and bareheaded on their hurdles, were exposed, during a great part of this interval, to sufferings much worse than death from the pitiless and unmitigable hate of the individuals around the scaffold.

At last, at the hour we have mentioned, the windows of the hall were thrown open, and Charles, with his mother and his two brothers, having advanced in the midst of ablaze of torches, the executioner proceeded to his horrid task, while they looked on with fixed attention.

### **VIII.** ***Incidents Of The Massacre***

**Lu 21:17 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.**

ALTHOUGH the general carnage at Paris terminated after the first three days, individuals continued to be occasionally fallen upon and put to death nearly throughout the week. After the cessation of the massacre, the city presented a hideous aspect. In many of the principal streets, the pillaged bodies and separated limbs of the slaughtered still lay putrefying on the ground. These disgusting relics crowded especially the banks of the river, along which a sort of market was established, where the relations of the dead might be seen bargaining for the corpses with those who had dragged them from the river.

Many, however, were carried down by the current beyond the bounds of the city. Between the fifth and thirteenth of September, no fewer than eleven hundred bodies were east ashore and interred in the neighborhood of St. Cloud, Auteuil, and Chaillot. More than a month elapsed before all the dead were removed from the streets; and even at the distance of more than a year, bodies were occasionally found on the roofs of houses, in cellars, or other less-frequented places.

The blood of Coligny is said to have remained distinguishable on the wall of his hotel for more than a century. "There are old men still alive"—says a French writer in 1826—"who affirm that they have known persons who had seen and touched that blood."

The numbers of those who perished in this terrible convulsion have, as was to be expected in a case so much open to conjecture, been variously estimated. They have been set down at from thirty thousand to one hundred thousand. It is probably near the truth to estimate them at fifty thousand. Those who survived were for a moment stupefied by the blow, and the Papists them selves seemed paralyzed with shame and remorse. Charles was as one struck by avenging retribution. He became restless, sullen, and dejected, and labored under a slow fever to the day of his death.

The lives of the young Prince of Condé and Henry of Navarre had been spared on condition of their embracing the Romish faith. To this they merely pretended to

accede, as both attempted to escape from Paris immediately afterwards. Condé alone was successful, and placed himself at the head of the Huguenots; and this party, which Charles had hoped to exterminate at one blow, soon mustered an army of eighteen thousand men, who kept possession of Rochelle, Montauban, and many castles, fortresses, and smaller towns. Thus Charles, and Catherine, his mother, gained nothing by their infamous treachery, but a character for perfidy and cruelty, which has been unequalled in the annals of history.

Some of the most eminent among the intended victims were fortunate enough, through various providences, to escape the fate which involved so many of their friends. We have already detailed the circumstances to which the lords and gentlemen lodged in the Faubourg St. Germain, were indebted for their preservation. Others were saved by having withdrawn from the capital altogether, before the fatal day, in consequence of the apprehensions they entertained, or by having declined to come hither at all.

Among others whom a kind Providence protected was young Bethune, a son of the Sieur de Rosny, whom his father had placed in the service of the Prince of Navarre. He was only in his twelfth year, and as soon as he was left in Paris, he proceeded to apply himself to the studies suited to his age, for which purpose his residence had been fixed on the south side of the river, in the neighborhood of the colleges. On the night of the twenty-third, he had retired early, intending to rise in the morning somewhat sooner than usual, to present himself at Court.

About three o'clock he was awakened by the cries of the people in the streets, and the alarm-bells which were ringing from all the steeples. His tutor and his valet-de-chambre had already both left the house to ascertain the nature of the commotion, and no one remained within except the landlord. This man was a Protestant, but in this emergency he earnestly urged his young lodger to accompany him to mass, to save his house from pillage, and both of them from being massacred.

Instead, however, of following this advice, Bethune resolved to endeavor to find his way to the college of Burgundy, the principal of which, he was sure, would not refuse him an asylum. Accordingly, putting on his scholars' gown, and taking a book under his arm, he set out. In the street he was stopped by a party of soldiers, who were proceeding to use him roughly. But one of them having snatched from him the book, which he carried, it fortunately turned out to be a breviary. The circumstance immediately procured him his liberty, and he was allowed to proceed on his way. He was again detained, in another street, and a third time at the entry to the cloister of St. Bennet, but he found his book, on both occasions, his sufficient passport.

As he hastened along, however, he beheld the mob everywhere breaking into and plundering the houses of the Huguenots, and, with the wildest cries, butchering indiscriminately men, women, and children – sights which could not fail to fill him with considerable impatience to reach his intended place of refuge. He at last arrived at the gate of the college, but here the porter for some time resolutely refused to give him admission. He contrived, however, to subdue the man's obstinacy by giving him some money he happened to have in his pocket, and he consented to carry up his name and his request to the principal.

That person, with a compassion and courage but rarely exemplified during this terrible crisis, immediately came to the gate and admitted his young friend, although greatly embarrassed how to dispose of him, in consequence of there being two priests at that moment in his chamber, who had just been telling him of the design that had been formed to exterminate the Huguenots, even to the infants at the breast, after the example, as they expressed it, of the Sicilian Vespers.

He contrived, however, to place Bethune in a secret apartment, where he lay concealed for three days, no one even visiting him except a trusty servant of the principal, who brought him his food. At the end of this period, the general massacre being over, two armed men, sent by his father, arrived at the college to inquire after him. In a few days he received directions from his father to remain at Paris, and proceed with his studies, and, in order that he might do so without danger, to go to mass, as his royal master and many others had consented to do.

One or two others, as well as Navarre and Condé, were permitted to live by the forbearance of the authors of the massacre. The illustrious l'Hospital, who, although he continued in the profession of the ancient faith, was universally suspected to be very nearly a Protestant at heart, had resigned the Chancellorship about four years before, and was at this time residing at his country seat not far from Paris.

His friends, apprehensive for his safety, urged him either to fly, or at least to put his house in a state of defence. But, conscious of no crime, the old man refused to do anything, which might seem to have been dictated by a sense of guilt. Even when a party of horse was seen advancing upon his residence, he would not permit his gates to be closed against them. Fortunately, however, while these assailants were on the point of massacring him, another party arrived, bringing express orders from the King that his life should be spared. On being informed that it had been determined to pardon him, he coolly replied, " I did not know that I had done anything to deserve either pardon or punishment."

The daughter of the ex-Chancellor was at Paris during the time of the massacre, and she also had the good fortune to save her life, through the protection of the Duchess of Guise.

Another person whom Charles spared of his own accord, was his surgeon, Ambrose Paré, who, as already mentioned, was in attendance to dress the wounds of the Admiral Coligny, after his attempted assassination. Paré, who was one of the most eminent men of his profession of whom that age could boast, lived, although a Protestant, in the enjoyment of the greatest familiarity with Charles. On the evening before the massacre, the King sent for him, and placing him in a room near his own chamber, ordered him to remain there without stirring, remarking that it was not reasonable that one so serviceable in saving the lives of others, should lose his own,

While the slaughter was going on, his Majesty endeavored to persuade Paré to change his religion. He is said to have replied, boldly, "By the light of God, Sire, I cannot doubt that you well remember having promised, as the conditions on which I engaged never to disobey you, that there were three things you would never ask me to do, namely, to be present at a battle, to quit your service, or to go to mass." The frank and gay tone of this answer seems 'to have put Charles in a good humor, and Paré was allowed to retain his religion, as well as his life.

The King afterwards came to Paré, and confessed to him that ever since the commencement of the massacre, he had felt as if he had been in a high fever, and that the figures of the murdered people, with their faces besmeared with blood, seemed to start up every moment before his eyes, both while he slept and when he was awake. On this Paré seized: the opportunity of recalling the royal mind to sentiments different from those which had recently possessed it, and the consequence was the appearance of an edict the next day, commanding all to abstain, on pain of death, from any further acts of slaughter or pillage.

## **IX.**

### ***Phillip de Mornay***

**Lu 21:19 In your patience possess ye your souls.**

THERE were few who had a narrower escape from the St. Bartholomew than the celebrated Philip de Mornay, afterwards so well known both as a soldier, a politician, and a man of letters. Although at this time only in his twenty-third year, De Mornay had already not only travelled over a great part of Europe, but had so much distinguished himself by his exertions, both with sword and pen, in the Protestant cause, as to have in some sort, taken his rank among the leaders of his party.

Having returned to France from England about the end of July, he immediately proceeded to Paris to join Coligny and the other Huguenot gentlemen who had assembled to witness the royal marriage. Yet, we are told, he was far from being without apprehension as to the designs of the Court, and felt so little sympathy with the prevailing feelings of his party, that on the day when the nuptial ceremony was performed, he scarcely left his lodgings.

On the following Friday, the 22d, he was preparing to return to his country-seat, and had taken leave of Coligny with that intention, when, soon after, his German servant came and informed him of the attempt that had been made on the Admiral's life. On receiving this intelligence, he immediately ran out to the street, and was one of those who accompanied the wounded man to his hotel. From this moment his fears of some impending mischief became stronger than ever. He made his mother, who had been with him, take her departure for the country without further delay. But he resolved, notwithstanding her entreaties, to remain in Paris, and to share the fate of his friends, whatever it might be.

Following the example of many of the other Huguenot gentlemen, he now took apartments near the Admiral, but fortunately they could not be got ready for him before Monday, and he was therefore obliged to remain till then at his former lodgings. On returning thither, at a late hour on Saturday night, from a visit to Coligny, he was informed of certain movements which had been observed among the soldiers and some of the citizens.

Next morning, having despatched his German servant before five o'clock to the house of the Admiral, the man soon after returned, and gave him an account of the dreadful state in which that part of the city was. He rose instantly, and dressed himself with the intention of leaving the house, but before he could get ready, the mob were in the street, and to attempt to escape was impossible.

Fortunately his landlord, although of the opposite faith, was disposed to do everything in his power to save him. He had just time to burn his papers before the party who had been sent to seek for him found their way to his apartments, and he was enabled to elude their search by concealing himself till they took their departure. That day he was not again molested, but on the following morning his landlord informed him that the frenzy of the populace had broken out anew, and that it was no longer in his power to shelter him.

By this time the murderers were in the neighboring house, the master of which they massacred, and afterwards threw his body out of one of the windows. On hearing this, De Mornay, putting on a black dress, of a very plain fashion, and his sword, immediately descended to the street, and had the good fortune to escape notice, while the mob were still engaged in pillaging the adjacent house. Having crossed the river he proceeded onward, not, however, without frequent exposure to the greatest danger. His

intention was to take refuge with an attorney by the name of Girard, who used to manage the affairs of his family, and who would not, he trusted, refuse him an asylum.

On arriving at the house he found Girard himself standing at the door. The moment was a critical one, for the Captain of the Watch was just passing. However, Girard had the presence of mind to receive him in such a manner as to occasion no suspicion. Having entered the house, he took his place at a desk, and employed himself in writing, like the other clerks.

Unfortunately, however, the persons belonging to his household had conjectured that this house would be his hiding-place, and thither they came, one after another, to seek for him or to share his retreat. This was soon remarked, and during the night an order came to Girard to deliver up the person whom he kept concealed in his house. To remain here longer, therefore, was impossible.

At an early hour in the morning, he set out alone to endeavor to escape from the city, or to find some other place of retreat. As he was leaving the house, a young man who had been his clerk came up to him, and, greatly to his comfort, offered to get him out by the Porte St. Martin, where he was known to the soldiers on guard, having formerly been one of them. On reaching this gate, however, they found to their dismay that orders had been given that it should not be opened that morning, they were therefore obliged to proceed to the adjoining Porte St. Denis, with the guard of which the clerk had no more acquaintance than De Mornay himself, and where it does not appear that the latter was likely to derive any advantage whatever from the presence of his companion, if, indeed, the circumstance of that person being only in his slippers should not rather expose them to greater risk of detention.

However, to the Porte St. Denis they went, and, after being questioned, were actually allowed to pass—De Mornay having represented himself as an attorney's clerk, who had got leave from his master to go, during the vacation, to Rouen, his native place, to see his relations. But the unlucky slippers were destined, after all, to work them the very mischief that De Mornay had feared. They had not been long gone, when it occurred to one of the guard that this was rather a strange attire for a person about to make so long a journey as to Rouen.

The man having mentioned his suspicions to his comrades, it was instantly resolved to despatch four armed men after the fugitives. They were overtaken near the village of La Vilette, and immediately brought back in the hands of a mob of the country people, who could hardly be prevented from tearing the prisoners to pieces on the way. The clerk, by his conduct, added not a little to the danger. Entirely losing his presence of mind as they dragged his master along, with the avowed intention of throwing him into the river, he swore vehemently that De Mornay was no Huguenot thus effectually revealing who the captive was.

With more prudence De Mornay himself barely remarked that he was convinced they would be sorry to put an innocent man to death from having mistaken him for another person, and assured them that, if they would take him into some house, he would give them such references to persons in the city as would satisfy them on inquiry that the account he had given of himself was correct. He at last prevailed upon them to comply with his request, and some of them accompanied him into a house in the suburbs. But now that he had obtained this reprieve, he hardly knew how to avail himself of it.

At first he thought of throwing himself out of the window, but on reflection resolved to make an attempt to get out of their hands by sheer assurance, and, when they asked for his promised references, he boldly named, as persons to whom he was

well known, the Messieurs de Rambouillet and the Cardinal, their brother. This he did, partly in the hope of overawing them somewhat by these imposing names, but principally because he knew they could not easily find access to personages of such rank, and would therefore, he imagined, be forced to take his asserted acquaintanceship on trust. But those with whom he had to deal were not to be so put off. Considering, probably, that an attorney's clerk could hardly be altogether without some friends of lower degree than nobles and cardinals, they insisted upon his giving them other references.

At this moment the wagon from Rouen made its appearance. As he had said that he belonged to that city, some one proposed to stop the vehicle in order to see if any of the persons in it knew anything of him. When they found that none of the passengers had ever heard of his name, their conviction that he was an impostor became more confirmed than ever, and the cry to have him thrown into the river was raised again with renewed violence.

Some further contention consumed a little more time, and while they were yet wrangling, two messengers whom, on De Mornay's reference, they had sent off to Girard, returned with his answer. De Mornay had written on an open note to him these words,—" Sir, I am detained by the people of the Porte and Faubourg of St. Denis, who will not believe that I am Philip Mornay, your clerk, to whom you have given leave to go to see his relations at Rouen during the vacation. I beg you will certify to them the truth of this statement, that they may permit me to proceed on my journey." Girard wrote on the back of the note the desired attestation, with the assurance that the individual in their hands was neither a rebel nor a seditious person, and subscribed his signature.

The suspicions they had entertained were, therefore, removed, and they resolved not only to set him free, but, by making some amends for the injustice, to escort him back to the spot where they had apprehended him. He got out of their hands at last about nine o'clock, and lost no time in pursuing his journey.

At Chantilly he obtained a horse from his friend, Montmorency, one of the few who had escaped the massacre by leaving Paris in time, under the apprehension of the impending treachery. At last, though not without some other perils and providential escapes, he arrived in safety at his estate in Normandy, on Friday the twenty-ninth. Here, however, he found his family and establishment dispersed, his mother having been obliged to take refuge in the house of a neighbor. In the course of a few days he embarked at Dieppe for England, and after encountering a severe storm, which at one time threatened to drive them back to Calais, and the terrors of which were augmented by the cries of numbers of women and children, flying like himself, from the blood-drenched land of their birth, he reached the port of Rye, on the ninth day after the massacre.

## X.

### ***Madam de Feuquieres.***

**Jer 48:6 Flee, save your lives, and be like the heath in the wilderness.**

THE foregoing narrative of the escape of De Mornay is derived from the account\* given us by Madame de Feuquieres, who afterwards became his wife. This lady, the widow of M. de Feuquieres, was also in Paris during the St. Bartholomew, and the dangers to which she was her self exposed, were still more formidable. Her husband had died of a wound received in battle about three years before, leaving with his young widow a daughter six months old. Soon after this she lost her father and her sister, and the father of her late husband.

\*Memoires et Correspondance de Duplessis-Mornay. Paris, 1824



To add to her distresses, she had been stripped of all her property by the civil confusions of the time, and was almost without the means of existence. This load of suffering broke down her health, which she never afterwards entirely recovered. At length, on the conclusion of the peace of 1570, she came to Paris with her daughter, on the invitation of her mother, who continued in the profession of the ancient religion, although the rest of the family had embraced the principles of the Reformation. From this time she had remained in the French capital.

On the morning of the Sunday on which the massacre commenced, she was still in bed, when one of the maid-servants, who was a Protestant, came running into her room in a state of great terror, to inform her that in the heart of the town, where she had just been, the mob were killing everybody. Without feeling any great alarm, Madame de Feuquieres—who had intended to go that day to the Louvre, to take leave of the Princess of Condé, and some others of her friends, preparatory to her proposed departure to the provinces—rose and put on her dress, when looking from her window, she perceived the whole street in commotion. Parties of military were mixed with the crowd, and all wore white crosses in their hats.

Convinced now of the reality of her danger, she sent off to her mother, with whom her brother also lived, to inquire the meaning of the disturbance. Meanwhile, a message was brought her from her maternal uncle, the Bishop of Senlis, who desired her to put out of the way whatever articles she had of greatest value, and, promised that he would immediately send some one to find her.

This, however, the Bishop forgot to do, or else found it impossible. After waiting, therefore, for about half an hour, and seeing the rioters fast approaching, she deemed it best to send off her daughter by a female servant to an officer in the king's household, who was a relation and one of her best friends. This gentleman received the child, and also, sent to its mother to say that, if she chose, he would give her too an asylum. She gladly accepted this offer, and leaving her lodgings for that purpose, about eight o'clock, she had scarcely gone when a part of the mob entered her house, in search of her.

When they could not find their expected victim, they proceeded to pillage the house. In the meantime, other Protestant friends came one after another, to claim the protection of the same roof, which sheltered her, till at length about forty persons were concealed in the house. Lest suspicion should be excited by the purchase of the unusual quantity of provisions required for so many guests, they sent for what articles they wanted to another part of the town. All these precautions, however, proved eventually insufficient to ward off the apprehended danger.

On Tuesday it was ordered that the house should be searched. By this time, fortunately, the greater number of those who had crowded to it on the first breaking out of the massacre, had left, and taken refuge elsewhere, so that there only remained Madame de F. and another lady, with their attendants. In the extremity which had now arrived, she was forced to conceal herself in a loft above a granary, where her ears were pierced by the wild cries of men, women, and children, whom they were butchering in the streets, and she was thrown, she tells us, into such perplexity and despair that she was at times tempted to rush down from her hiding-place, and deliver herself up at once into the hands of the infuriated populace.

What principally distracted her was the thought of her daughter, whom she had been obliged to leave below, in the charge of a servant. This person, however, succeeded in conveying the child, through the midst of numerous dangers, to the house of a relation of its mother, with whom it remained in safety. But it was now judged advisable that Madame de F. also should, as soon as possible, leave her present asylum. It was impossible for her to venture to her mother's residence, as a guard had

been placed round the house. She therefore resolved, as her only resource, to throw herself upon the compassion of a person who had, some time before, married one of her maid-servants, and who was now captain of the watch in his quarters, and in that character one of the commissioned agents of the massacre. This man gave her admission, and permitted her to remain in his house all the night, though not without making her listen to many violent invectives against the Huguenots, and insisting with her in warm terms to go to mass.

On the following day, at noon, she left this retreat, and set out to find her way to the house of the President Tambonneau, in the cloister of Notre Dame, who had been apprized of her situation by her mother, and solicited to afford her protection. She effected her entry into the house without being observed, and being placed in the study, she remained there unmolested during the rest of that day and the greater part of the next.

On the evening of Thursday, however, information reached the family that the mob were about to visit them. There was not a moment to be lost, and the hunted fugitive was again transferred to the house of a corn-merchant, an acquaintance of her protector, and a person on whose fidelity they could rely. Here she remained till the following Wednesday. She was concealed in an upper chamber, and her food was brought to her by one of the females of the family, who concealed it in her apron for fear of being discovered by other inmates of the house. During this time her mother had sent to implore her to go to mass, but she steadily refused to yield to the proposal.

At last she determined to make an attempt by herself to escape from Paris. On Wednesday, about eleven o'clock in the morning, she descended from her lurking-place, walked down to the river, and stepped on board of a boat which was going to Sens. She soon, however, found herself exposed to more imminent danger than ever. When they reached the Pont de la Tournelle, the boat was stopped by the guard, and their passports demanded from them on board.

The others showed theirs, but Madame de F. had none. On this the soldiers, eagerly exclaiming that she was a Huguenot, and must be drowned, forced her to leave the boat. Seeing herself thus on the point of being put to death, she besought them to conduct her to the house of M. de Voisenon, Auditor of Accounts, who was one of her friends, assuring them that he would answer for her.

They at last agreed to comply with her request, and two of their number were sent with her. When they arrived at the house, the soldiers remained at the door, and allowed her to walk up stairs alone. She had thus an opportunity of hastily intimating to her friend the situation in which she was, and entreating his interference to save her life.

He immediately went down to the soldiers, and assured them that he had often seen the person they had brought to him in the house of Madame d'Eprunes, the mother of the Bishop of Senlis, whose family were well known to be good Catholics. The men, however, told him it was not about Madame d'Eprunes and her family they came to inquire, but about the female now present. All the reply of the Auditor to this was, that he had known her to be a good Catholic formerly, but what she might be now he could not say.

Fortunately, at this point of the conversation a woman who was known to the soldiers came up, and asked them what they were going to do with the person they had got in their hands. "Pardieu," they answered, "she is a Huguenot, and she must be drowned, for we see she is frightened." "Why," replied the woman, "you know me; I am no Huguenot; I go to mass every day; and yet I have been so frightened, that for these eight days past I have been in a fever." "In truth," exclaimed one of the soldiers; "I have been in the same state myself." The two men at last consented to conduct their prisoner

back to the boat, merely remarking, as they put her again on board, that if she had been a man she should not have escaped so easily.

We must sum up very briefly the remaining hazards which Madame de Feuquieres ran in effecting her escape. The house of the corn-merchant in which she had lain so long concealed, was pillaged immediately after she left it. At the place where they landed for the night there was only one sleeping chamber at the inn, which she was obliged to occupy with two other women. She greatly feared that their suspicions would be excited by her clothes, a part of which were fine and rich, while the rest of her attire was that of a servant. Her apprehensions here, however, proved vain.

On Thursday she left the boat, and proceeded on foot to the residence of the Chancellor l'Hospital, a distance of about five leagues. They found the Chancellor's house occupied by the guard which the King had sent for his protection. She therefore determined to take up her residence in the cottage of his vine-dresser—a poor man who treated her with the kindest hospitality. Here she remained for fifteen days, during which time the soldiers came to the village, searching every suspected house. But they were prevented from entering that in which she was concealed, in consequence of its being considered under the Chancellor's guard.

At last, when matters seemed to be some what tranquillized, she set out, accompanied by the vine-dresser, to Eprunes, a property belonging to her grandmother, which she reached in safety. She was received here as one returned from the dead. From this she went to Buhy, now in possession of her eldest brother. Here she was exposed to new persecutions.

Her brother—who had saved his life by consenting to go to mass was still so alarmed that he refused to allow her to remain in his house, on her persisting in declining to accompany him to chapel. With a very scanty supply of money she was obliged once more to set out on her travels. She went to Sedan, where she arrived on the first of November, and received the warmest welcome, and the supply of all her wants, from numerous friends, most of whom had, —like herself, taken refuge here, after escaping from the Parisian massacre. She continued to reside in Sedan till her marriage with Philip de Mornay, in January, 1576.

## ***XI.***

### ***The Escape Of Marshal de la Force.***

**Isa 13:18 ... and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare children.**

PERHAPS the most extraordinary deliverance from the St. Bartholomew, of which an account has come down to us, was that of the Marshal de la Force.

The Sieur de la Force, the father of the Marshal, was one of the Protestant gentlemen who were lodged, when the massacre broke out, in the Faubourg St. Germain. The first notice he received, on the morning of the fatal Sunday, of what was passing in the city, was from a person who had swam across the river to apprise him of his danger. There were living with La Force his two sons, the youngest of whom, afterwards the Marshal, was now in his thirteenth year. Had the father thought but of his own safety, he probably might have been able, like many of his friends, to have effected his escape. But some time was lost in getting his two boys in readiness to fly with him, and before they had left the house, it was broken into by the murderers.

A man of the name of Martin was at the head of the party, who having made his men instantly disarm the prisoners, addressed himself to La Force, and told him with the most violent oaths, that his last moment was come. On La Force, however, offering him two thousand crowns to save the lives of himself and children, the ruffian and his band agreed to accept of this bribe. After having pillaged the house, they desired the father and his two sons to tie their handkerchief in the form of crosses around their hats, and to turn up the right sleeves of their coats, and then they all set out together. The river, as they crossed it, was already covered with dead bodies, and the same frightful tokens of the tragedy acting around them, strewed the courts of the Louvre and the other places through which they passed. At last they arrived at Martin's house, and here La Force having been first bound by an oath not to attempt to withdraw either himself or his sons until he should have paid the two thousand crowns, they were left in charge of two Swiss soldiers.

Madame de Brissembourg, the sister-in-law of La Force, who resided in the Arsenal, of which her relation, the Marshal de Biron, was grandmaster, upon being applied to for the money to pay the promised ransom, engaged to send the requisite sum by the evening of the following day. La Force and his sons were therefore obliged to remain till then where they were.

At last, when the appointed time arrived, a messenger was despatched for the money. While he was yet absent, the Count de Coconas suddenly presented himself at the head of a party of soldiers, bringing orders, as he said, to conduct the prisoners immediately to the Duke of Anjou. He had no sooner intimated the purpose of his visit, than his men, laying hold of the father and his sons, pulled off their bonnets and mantles, and by the rough manner in which they used them, afforded them a sufficient presage of the fate prepared for them. They led them, however, some distance down the street without offering them violence. They then halted, and making a sudden assault upon them, they despatched first the eldest son, and the next instant the father, by multiplied blows with their daggers.

By a singular chance, the youngest son, in the confusion of the encounter, escaped untouched. The wildly-directed blows of the murderers had all missed him, having fallen upon his father and his brother. He had the presence of mind to throw himself down on the ground beside them, and as he lay bathed in their blood, to call out that he was mortally wounded, and then to counterfeit the appearance of death.

The murderers, supposing their deed done, after hastily stripping the three bodies, left the spot. It was not long before a number of the neighbors approached, and among the rest a poor man belonging to the tennis-court in the Rue du Verdelet. This person, on beholding the body of the youngest son, happened to remark, loud enough for the words to reach the ear of the boy, "Alas! this one is but a mere child." Hearing these expressions of compassion, young La Force ventured gently to raise his head and to whisper that he was still alive. The man desired him to remain still a little longer till he could come to remove him without being observed. As soon as everybody was out of sight he returned, and throwing an old ragged cloak over the boy, he took him on his back, and set out with him for his own house.

Some person whom he met on the way having asked him who it was he was carrying, "It is my nephew," said he, "who has got drunk; I shall give him a good whipping this evening."

He soon reached his garret with his burden, and here La Force spent the night. The next morning, Tuesday, his preserver, at his request, agreed to conduct him to the Arsenal, the boy gladly engaging to pay him thirty crowns for this service. They set out

together at break of day, and in a short time reached the gate of the Arsenal without having met with any interruption.

The difficulty now was for La Force, in the beggarly attire he had on, to get in, but leaving his guide, he at last found an opportunity, when the gate was open for the admission of another person, to pass through without being observed by the porter. He met no one till he reached the part of the building in which his aunt resided. When Madame de Brissembourg beheld him, her astonishment and emotion was great, for she had already been informed that all the three had perished. The thirty crowns were immediately sent out to his preserver, and La Force was placed in bed that he might recover from the effects of the terror and agitation he had undergone.

He had remained concealed in the Arsenal for the two following days, but at the end of this time information was brought to Marshal Biron that the building was about to be searched by order of the King, in consequence of reports that were in circulation, of some Huguenots having taken refuge there. It was deemed advisable, therefore, that he should be immediately transferred to some other hiding-place, and accordingly on Thursday morning, attired as a page, he was confided to the care of a gentleman with whom he remained seven or eight days.

But even at that distance of time after the massacre, the report of his singular escape having got abroad, fears were still entertained that an attempt would be made to gain possession of him. By some management it was contrived to convey him beyond the walls of the capital, and after several other hazardous adventures, he reached the house of his uncle, the Sieur de Caumont, in the South of France, by whom he was received with great joy. The boy thus miraculously rescued from destruction, and who eventually rose to the rank of Marshal, lived for more than eighty years after this escape, having died in 1653, at the age of ninety-four.

## ***XII.***

### ***The St. Bartholomew Ends.***

**Ge 4:10 And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.**

THESE narratives of individual adventure and suffering may serve to convey more correctly than any merely general description could do, a representation of the terrors and inhumanities of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. They set before us vividly and truly the unrestrained riot of the slaughterers, the furious excitement and fever of public opinion, and the bewilderment and dismay of the unhappy beings who were scattered before the whirlwind of Papal persecution and popular wrath.

The judgment passed upon this massacre by all reflecting persons, even those least favorable to Protestantism, must be that no example of any such enormous atrocity can be found in the national annals of all the world. Nor shall we think this judgment harsh or undeserved, when we view in their full dimensions certain of the more remarkable characteristics of the transaction—its elaborate treachery—the royal and female hands that washed themselves in the bloodshed—the hour of reconciliation and festive rejoicing in which the victims were attacked—the number of the noble, the beautiful, and the virtuous who perished—the indiscriminate and unsparing comprehensiveness, the wild fury, the savage cruelty, the abominable brutality and extravagance of outrage, carried, in many cases, not only beyond the extinction of the last throb of life, but to the utmost limits of humiliation—and disfigurement with which the slaughtering knife could do its office!

The whole story is a terrific illustration of what human nature is capable of becoming and of perpetrating, under the power of bigotry and religious hatred, aided by the hardening and depraving influence of barbarous institutions and manners. May God save our land, and our homes, from such enormities, whether done in the holy name of religion, or from the impulse of other motives!

*“The same spirit which in the Dark Ages consigned men and women to prison, to exile, and to death, which conceived the exquisite torture of the Inquisition, which planned and executed the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, and which kindled the fires of Smithfield, is still at work with malignant energy in unregenerate hearts. The history of truth has ever been the record of a struggle between right and wrong. The proclamation of the gospel has ever been carried forward in this world in the face of opposition, peril, loss, and suffering.” {AA 84.3}*