

Fox's Book of Martyrs

A History of the lives, sufferings and triumphant deaths of the early Christian martyrs

Edited by William Byron Forbush

CHAPTER XXI

Persecutions of the French Protestants in the South of France,

During the Years 1814 and 1820

The persecution in this Protestant part of France continued with very little intermission from the revocation of the edict of Nantes, by Louis XIV until a very short period previous to the commencement of the late French Revolution. In the year 1785, M. Rebaut St. Etienne and the celebrated M. de la Fayette were among the first persons who interested themselves with the court of Louis XVI in removing the scourge of persecution from this injured people, the inhabitants of the south of France.

Such was the opposition on the part of the Catholics and the courtiers, that it was not until the end of the year 1790, that the Protestants were freed from their alarms. Previously to this, the Catholics at Nismes in particular, had taken up arms;

Nismes then presented a frightful spectacle; armed men ran through the city, fired from the corners of the streets, and attacked all they met with swords and forks.

A man named Astuc was wounded and thrown into the aqueduct;

Baudon fell under the repeated strokes of bayonets and sabers, and his body was also thrown into the water; Boucher, a young man only seventeen years of age, was shot as he was looking out of his window; three electors wounded, one dangerously; another elector wounded, only escaped death by repeatedly declaring he was a Catholic; a third received four saber wounds, and was taken home dreadfully mangled. The citizens that fled were arrested by the Catholics upon the roads, and obliged to give proofs of their religion before their lives were granted. M. and Madame Vogue were at their country house,

which the zealots broke open, where they massacred both, and destroyed their dwelling. M. Blacher, a Protestant seventy years of age, was cut to pieces with a sickle; young Pyerre, carrying some food to his brother, was asked, "Catholic or Protestant?" "Protestant," being the reply, a monster fired at the lad, and he fell. One of the murderer's companions said, "You might as well have killed a lamb." "I have sworn," replied he, "to kill four Protestants for my share, and this will count for one." However, as these atrocities provoked the troops to unite in defence of the people, a terrible vengeance was retaliated upon the Catholic party that had used arms, which with other circumstances, especially the toleration exercised by Napoleon Bonaparte, kept them down completely until the year 1814, when the unexpected return of the ancient government rallied them all once more round the old banners.

The Arrival of King Louis XVIII at Paris

This was known at Nismes on the thirteenth of April, 1814.

In a quarter of an hour, the white cockade was seen in every direction, the white flag floated on the public buildings, on the splendid monuments of antiquity, and even on the tower of Mange, beyond the city walls. The Protestants, whose commerce had suffered materially during the war, were among the first to unite in the general joy, and to send in their adhesion to the senate, and the legislative body; and several of the Protestant departments sent addresses to the throne, but unfortunately, M. Froment was again at Nismes at the moment, when many bigots being ready to join him, the blindness and fury of the sixteenth century rapidly succeeded the intelligence and philanthropy of the nineteenth. A line of distinction was instantly traced between men of different religious opinions; the spirit of the old Catholic Church was again to regulate each person's share of esteem and safety.

The difference of religion was now to govern everything else; and even Catholic domestics who had served Protestants with zeal and affection began to neglect their duties, or to perform them ungraciously, and with reluctance. At the fetes and spectacles that were given at the public expense, the absence of the Protestants was charged on them as a proof of their disloyalty; and in the midst of the cries of Vive le Roi! the discordant sounds of A bas le Maire, down with the mayor, were heard. M. Castletan was a Protestant; he appeared in public with the prefect M. Ruland, a Catholic, when potatoes were thrown at him, and the people declared that he ought to resign his office. The bigots of Nismes, even succeeded in procuring an address to be presented to the king, stating that there ought to be in France but one God, one king, and one faith. In this they were imitated by the Catholics of several towns.

The History of the Silver Child

About this time, M. Baron, counsellor of the Cour Royale of Nismes, formed the plan of dedicating to God a silver child, if the Duchess d'Angouleme would give a prince to France. This project was converted into a public religious vow, which was the subject of conversation both in public and private, whilst persons, whose imaginations were

inflamed by these proceedings, ran about the streets crying *Vivent les Boubons*, or "the Bourbons forever." In consequence of this superstitious frenzy, it is said that at Alais women were advised and insigated to poison their Protestant husbands, and at length it was found convenient to accuse them of political crimes. They could no longer appear in public without insults and injuries. When the mobs met with Protestants, they seized them, and danced round them with barbarous joy, and amidst repeated cries of *Vive le Roi*, they sang verses, the burden of which was, "We will wash our hands in Protestant blood, and make black puddings of the blood of Calvin's children."

The citizens who came to the promenades for air and refreshment from the close and dirty streets were chased with shouts of *Vive le Roi*, as if those shouts were to justify every excess. If Protestants referred to the charter, they were directly assured it would be of no use to them, and that they had only been managed to be more effectually destroyed. Persons of rank were heard to say in the public streets, "All the Huguenots must be killed; this time their children must be killed, that none of the accursed race may remain."

Still, it is true, they were not murdered, but cruelly treated; Protestant children could no longer mix in the sports of Catholics, and were not even permitted to appear without their parents. At dark their families shut themselves up in their apartments; but even then stones were thrown against their windows. When they arose in the mornin it was not uncommon to find gibbets drawn on their doors or walls; and in the streets the Catholics held cords already soaped before their eyes, and pointed out the insruments by which they hoped and designed to exterminate them. Small gallows or models were handed about, and a man who lived opposite to one of the pastors, exhibited one of these models in his window, and made signs sufficiently intelligible when the minister passed. A figure representing a Protestant preacher was also hung up on a public crossway, and the most atrocious songs were sung under his window.

Towards the conclusion of the carnival, a plan had even been formed to make a caricature of the four ministers of the place, and burn them in effigy; but this was prevented by the mayor of Nismes, a Protestant. A dreadful song presented to the prefect, in the country dialect, with a false translation, was printed by his approval, and had a great run before he saw the extent of the rror into which he had been betrayed. The sixty-third regiment of the line was publicly censured and insulted, for having, according to order, protected Protestants. In fact, the Protestants seemed to be as sheep destined for the slaughter.

The Catholic Arms at Beaucaire

In May, 1815, a federative association, similar to that of Lyons, Grenoble, Paris, Avignon, and Montpellier, was desired by many persons at Nismes; but this federation terminated here after an ephemeral and illusory existence of fourteen days. In the meanwhile a large party of Catholic zealots were in arms at Beaucaire, and who soon pushed their patroles so near the walls of Nismes, "so as to alarm the inhabitants." These Catholics applied to the English off Marseilles for assistance, and obtained the grant of one thousand muskets, ten thousand cartouches, etc. General Gilly, however, was soon sent against these partizans, who prevented them from coming to extremes by granting

them an armistice; and yet when Louis XVIII had returned to Paris, after the expiration of Napoleon's reign of a hundred days, and peace and party spirit seemed to have been subdued, even at Nismes, bands from Beaucaire joined Trestaillon in this city, to glut the vengeance they had so long premeditated. General Gilly had left the department several days: the troops of the line left behind had taken the white cockade, and waited further orders, whilst the new commissioners had only to proclaim the cessation of hostilities and the complete establishment of the king's authority. In vain, no commissioners appeared, no despatches arrived to calm and regulate the public mind; but towards evening the advanced guard of the banditti, to the amount of several hundreds, entered the city, undesired but unopposed.

As they marched without order or discipline, covered with clothes or rags of all colors, decorated with cockades, not white, but white and green, armed with muskets, sabers, forks, pistols and reaping hooks, intoxicated with wine, and stained with the blood of the Protestants whom they had murdered on their route, they presented a most hideous and appalling spectacle. In the open place in the front of the barracks, this banditti was joined by the city armed mob, headed by Jaques Dupont, commonly called Trestaillon. To save the effusion of blood, this garrison of about five hundred men consented to capitulate, and marched out sad and defenceless; but when about fifty had passed, the rabble commenced a tremendous fire on their confiding and unprotected victims; nearly all were killed or wounded, and but very few could re-enter the yard before the garrison gates were again closed. These were again forced in an instant, and all were massacred who could not climb over roofs, or leap into the adjoining gardens. In a word, death met them in every place and in every shape, and this Catholic massacre rivalled in cruelty and surpassed in treachery the crimes of the September assassins of Paris, and the Jacobinical butcheries of Lyons and Avignon. It was marked not only by the fervor of the Revolution but by the subtlety of the league, and will long remain a blot upon the history of the second restoration.

Massacre and Pillage at Nismes

Nismes now exhibited a most awful scene of outrage and carnage, though many of the Protestants had fled to the Convennes and the Gardonenque. The country houses of Messrs. Rey, Guiret, and several others, had been pillaged, and the inhabitants treated with wanton barbarity. Two parties had glutted their savage appetites on the farm of Madame Frat: the first, after eating, drinking, and breaking the furniture, and stealing what they thought proper, took leave by announcing the arrival of their comrades, 'compared with whom,' they said, 'they should be thought merciful.' Three men and an old woman were left on the premises: at the sight of the second company two of the men fled. "Are you a Catholic?" said the banditti to the old woman. "Yes." "Repeat, then, your Pater and Ave." Being terrified, she hesitated, and was instantly knocked down with a musket. On recovering her senses, she stole out of the house, but met Ladet, the old valet de ferme, bringing in a salad which the depredators had ordered him to cut. In vain she endeavored to persuade him to fly. "Are you a Protestant?" they exclaimed; "I am." A musket being discharged at him, he fell wounded, but not dead. To consummate their work, the monsters lighted a fire with straw and boards, threw their living victim into the

flames, and suffered him to expire in the most dreadful agonies. They then ate their salad, omelet, etc. The next day, some laborers, seeing the house open and deserted, entered, and discovered the half consumed body of Ladet. The prefect of the Gard, M. Darbaud Jouques, attempting to palliate the crimes of the Catholics, had the audacity to assert that Ladet was a Catholic; but this was publicly contradicted by two of the pastors at Nismes.

Another party committed a dreadful murder at St. Cezaire, upon Imbert la Plume, the husband of Suzon Chivas. He was met on returning from work in the fields. The chief promised him his life, but insisted that he must be conducted to the prison at Nismes. Seeing, however, that the party was determined to kill him, he resumed his natural character, and being a powerful and courageous man advanced and exclaimed, "You are brigands-fire!" Four of them fired, and he fell, but he was not dead; and while living they mutilated his body; and then passing a cord round it, drew it along, attached to a cannon of which they had possession. It was not until after eight days that his relatives were apprised of his death. Five individuals of the family of Chivas, all husbands and fathers, were massacred in the course of a few days.

The merciless treatment of the women, in this persecution at Nismes, was such as would have disgraced any savages ever heard of. The widows Rivet and Bernard were forced to sacrifice enormous sums; and the house of Mrs. Lecointe was ravaged, and her goods destroyed. Mrs. F. Didier had her dwelling sacked and nearly demolished to the foundation. A party of these bigots visited the widow Perrin, who lived on a little farm at the windmills; having committed every species of devastation, they attacked even the sanctuary of the dead, which contained the relics of her family. They dragged the coffins out, and scattered the contents over the adjacent grounds. In vain this outraged widow collected the bones of her ancestors and replaced them: they were again dug up; and, after several useless efforts, they were reluctantly left spread over the surface of the fields.

Royal Decree in Favor of the Persecuted

At length the decree of Louis XVIII which annulled all the extraordinary powers conferred either by the king, the princes, or subordinate agents, was received at Nismes, and the laws were now to be administered by the regular organs, and a new prefect arrived to carry them into effect; but in spite of proclamations, the work of destruction, stopped for a moment, was not abandoned, but soon renewed with fresh vigor and effect. On the thirtieth of July, Jacques Combe, the father of a family, was killed by some of the national guards of Rusau, and the crime was so public, that the commander of the party restored to the family the pocketbook and papers of the deceased. On the following day tumultuous crowds roamed about the city and suburbs, threatening the wretched peasants; and on the first of August they butchered them without opposition.

About noon on the same day, six armed men, headed by Truphemy, the butcher, surrounded the house of Monot, a carpenter; two of the party, who were smiths, had been at work in the house the day before, and had seen a Protestant who had taken refuge there, M. Bourillon, who had been a lieutenant in the army, and had retired on a pension. He was a man of an excellent character, peaceable and harmless, and had never served

the emperor Napoleon. Truphemy not knowin him, he was pointed out partaking of a frugal breakfast with the family. Truphemy ordered him to go along with him, adding, "Your friend, Saussine, is already in the other world." Truphemy placed him in the middle of his troop, and artfully ordered him to cry Vive l'Empereur he refused, adding, he had never served the emperor. In vain did the women and children of the house intercede for his life, and praise his amiable and virtuous qualities. He was marched to the Esplanade and shot, first by Truphemy and then by the others. Several persons, attracted by the firing approached, but were threatened with a similar fate.

After some time the wretches departed, shouting Vive le Roi. Some women met them, and one of them appearing affected, said, "I have killed seven to-day, for my share, and if you say a word, you shall be the eighth." Pierre Courbet, a stocking weaver, was torn from his loom by an armed band, and shot at his own door. His eldest daughter was knocked down with the butt end of a musket; and a poignard was held at the breast of his wife while the mob plundered her apartments. Paul Heraut, a silk weaver, was literally cut in pieces, in the presence of a large crowd, and amidst the unavailing cries and tears of his wife and four young children. The murderers only abandoned the corpse to return to Heraut's house and secure everything valuable. The number of murders on this day could not be ascertained. One person saw six bodies at the Cours Neuf, and nine were carried to the hospital.

If murder some time after, became less frequent for a few days, pillage and forced contributions were actively enforced. M. Salle d'Hombro, at several visits was robbed of seven thousand francs; and on one occasion, when he pleaded the sacrifices he had made, "Look," said a bandit, pointing to his pipe, "this will set fire to your house; and this," brandishing his sword, "will finish you." No reply could be made to these arguments. M. Feline, a silk manufacturer, was robbed of thirty-two thousand francs in gold, three thousand francs in silver, and several bales of silk.

The small shopkeepers were continually exposed to visits and demands of provisions, drapery, or whatever they sold; and the same hands that set fire to the houses of the rich, and tore up the vines of the cultivator, broke the looms of the weaver; and stole the tools of the artisan. Desolation reigned in the sanctuary and in the city. The armed bands, instead of being reduced, were increased; the fugitives, instead of returning, received constant accessions, and their friends who sheltered them were deemed rebellious. Those Protestants who remained were deprived of all their civil and religious rights, and even the advocates and huissiers entered into a resolution to exclude all of "the pretended reformed religion" from their bodies. Those who were employed in selling tobacco were deprived of their licenses. The Protestant deacons who had the charge of the poor were all scattered. Of five pastors only two remained; one of these was obliged to change his residence, and could only venture to admnister the consolations of religion, or perform the functions of his ministry under cover of the night.

Not content with these modes of torment, calumnious and inflammatory publications charged the Protestants with raising the proscribed standard in the communes, and

invoking the fallen Napoleon; and, of course, as unworthy the protection of the laws and the favor of the monarch.

Hundreds after this were dragged to prison without even so much as a written order; and though an official newspaper, bearing the title of the Journal du Gard, was set up for five months, while it was influenced by the prefect, the mayor, and other functionaries, the word "charter" was never once used in it. One of the first numbers, on the contrary, represented the suffering Protestants, as "Crocodiles, only weeping from rage and regret that they had no more victims to devour; as persons who had surpassed Danton, Marat, and Robespierre, in doing mischief; and as having prostituted their daughters to the garrison to gain it over to Napoleon." An extract from this article, stamped with the crown and the arms of the Bourbons, was hawked about the streets, and the vender was adorned with the medal of the police.

Petition of the Protestant Refugees

To these reproaches it is proper to oppose the petition which the Protestant refugees in Paris presented to Louis XVIII in behalf of their brethren at Nismes.

"We lay at your feet, sire, our acute sufferings. In your name our fellow citizens are slaughtered, and their property laid waste. Misled peasants, in pretended obedience to your orders, had assembled at the command of a commissioner appointed by your august nephew. Although ready to attack us, they were received with the assurances of peace. On the fifteenth of July, 1815, we learned your majesty's entrance into Paris, and the white flag immediately waved on our edifices. The public tranquillity had not been disturbed, when armed peasants introduced themselves. The garrison capitulated, but were assailed on their departure, and almost totally massacred. Our national guard was disarmed, the city filled with strangers, and the houses of the principal inhabitants, professing the reformed religion, were attacked and plundered. We subjoin the list. Terror has driven from our city the most respectable inhabitants.

"Your majesty has been deceived if there has not been placed before you the picture of the horrors which make a desert of your good city of Nismes. Arrests and proscriptions are continually taking place, and difference of religious opinions is the real and only cause. The calumniated Protestants are the defenders of the throne. Your nephew has beheld our children under his banners; our fortunes have been placed in his hands. Attacked without reason, the Protestants have not, even by a just resistance, afforded their enemies the fatal pretext for calumny. Save us, sire! extinguish the brand of civil war; a single act of your will would restore to political existence a city interesting for its population and its manufactures. Demand an account of their conduct from the chiefs who had brought our misfortunes upon us. We place before your eyes all the documents that have reached us. Fear paralyzes the hearts, and stifles the complaints of our fellow citizens. Placed in a more secure situation, we venture to raise our voice in their behalf," etc., etc.

Monstrous Outrage Upon Females

At Nismes it is well known that the women wash their clothes either at the fountains or on the banks of streams. There is a large basin near the fountain, where numbers of women may be seen every day, kneeling at the edge of the water, and beating the clothes with heavy pieces of wood in the shape of battledores. This spot became the scene of the most shameful and indecent practices. The Catholic rabble turned the women's petticoats over their heads, and so fastened them as to continue their exposure, and their subjection to a newly invented species of chastisement; for nails being placed in the wood of the battoirs in the form of fleur-de-lis, they beat them until the blood streamed from their bodies, and their cries rent the air. Often was death demanded as a commutation of this ignominious punishment, but refused with a malignant joy. To carry their outrage to the highest possible degree, several who were in a state of pregnancy were assailed in this manner. The scandalous nature of these outrages prevented many of the sufferers from making them public, and, especially, from relating the most aggravating circumstances. "I have seen," says M. Duran, "a Catholic advocat, accompanying the assassins of the fauxbourg Bourgade, arm a battoir with sharp nails in the form of fleur-de-lis; I have seen them raise the garments of females, and apply, with heavy blows, to the bleeding body this battoir or battledore, to which they gave a name which my pen refuses to record. The cries of the sufferers-the streams of blood-the murmurs of indignation which were suppressed by fear-nothing could move them. The surgeons who attended on those women who are dead, can attest, by the marks of their wounds, the agonies which they must have endured, which, however horrible, is most strictly true."

Nevertheless, during the progress of these horrors and obscenities, so disgraceful to France and the Catholic religion, the agents of government had a powerful force under their command, and by honestly employing it they might have restored tranquillity. Murder and robbery, however, continued, and were winked at, by the Catholic magistrates, with very few exceptions; the administrative authorities, it is true, used words in their proclamations, etc., but never had recourse to actions to stop the enormities of the persecutors, who boldly declared that, on the twenty-fourth, the anniversary of St. Bartholomew, they intended to make a general massacre. The members of the Reformed Church were filled with terror, and, instead of taking part in the election of deputies, were occupied as well as they could in providing for their own personal safety.

Outrages Committed in the Villages, etc.

We now quit Nismes to take a view of the conduct of the persecutors in the surrounding country. After the re-establishment of the royal government, the local authorities were distinguished for their zeal and forwardness in supporting their employers, and, under pretence of rebellion, concealment of arms, nonpayment of contributions, etc., troops, national guards, and armed mobs, were permitted to plunder, arrest, and murder peaceable citizens, not merely with impunity, but with encouragement and approbation. At the village of Milhaud, near Nismes, the inhabitants were frequently forced to pay large sums to avoid being pillaged. This, however, would not avail at Madame Teulon's: On Sunday, the sixteenth of July, her house and grounds were ravaged; the valuable

furniture removed or destroyed, the hay and wood burnt, and the corpse of a child, buried in the garden, taken up and dragged round a fire made by the populace. It was with great difficulty that M. Teulon escaped with his life.

M. Picherol, another Protestant, had deposited some of his effects with a Catholic neighbor; this house was attacked, and though all the property of the latter was respected, that of his friend was seized and destroyed. At the same village, one of a party doubting whether M. Hermet, a tailor, was the man they wanted, asked, "Is he a Protestant?" this he acknowledged. "Good," said they, and he was instantly murdered. In the canton of Vauvert, where there was a consistory church, eighty thousand francs were extorted.

In the communes of Beauvoisin and Generac similar excesses were committed by a handful of licentious men, under the eye of the Catholic mayor, and to the cries of Vive le Roi! St. Gilles was the scene of the most unblushing villainy. The Protestants, the most wealthy of the inhabitants, were disarmed, whilst their houses were pillaged. The mayor was appealed to; but he laughed and walked away. This officer had, at his disposal, a national guard of several hundred men, organized by his own orders. It would be wearisome to read the lists of the crimes that occurred during many months. At Clavison the mayor prohibited the Protestants the practice of singing the Psalms commonly used in the temple, that, as he said, the Catholics might not be offended or disturbed.

At Sommieres, about ten miles from Nismes, the Catholics made a splendid procession through the town, which continued until evening and was succeeded by the plunder of the Protestants. On the arrival of foreign troops at Sommieres, the pretended search for arms was resumed; those who did not possess muskets were even compelled to buy them on purpose to surrender them up, and soldiers were quartered on them at six francs per day until they produced the articles in demand. The Protestant church which had been closed, was converted into barracks for the Austrians. After divine service had been suspended for six months at Nismes, the church, called the Temple by the Protestants, was re-opened, and public worship performed on the morning of the twenty-fourth of December. On examining the belfry, it was discovered that some persons had carried off the clapper of the bell. As the hour of service approached, a number of men, women, and children collected at the house of M. Ribot, the pastor, and threatened to prevent the worship. At the appointed time, when he proceeded towards the church, he was surrounded; the most savage shouts were raised against him; some of the women seized him by the collar; but nothing could disturb his firmness, or excite his impatience; he entered the house of prayer, and ascended the pulpit. Stones were thrown in and fell among the worshippers; still the congregation remained calm and attentive, and the service was concluded amidst noise, threats, and outrage.

On retiring many would have been killed but for the chasseurs of the garrison, who honorably and zealously protected them. From the captain of these chasseurs, M. Ribot soon after received the following letter:

January 2, 1816.

"I deeply lament the prejudices of the Catholics against the Protestants, who they pretend do not love the king. Continue to act as you have hitherto done, and time and your conduct will convince the Catholics to the contrary: should any tumult occur similar to that of Saturday last inform me. I preserve my reports of these acts, and if the agitators prove incorrigible, and forget what they owe to the best of kings and the charter, I will do my duty and inform the government of their proceedings. Adieu, my dear sir; assure the consistory of my esteem, and of the sense I entertain of the moderation with which they have met the provocations of the evil-disposed at Sommieres. I have the honor to salute you with respect.

SUVAL DE LAINE."

Another letter to this worthy pastor from the Marquis de Montlord, was received on the sixth of January, to encourage him to unite with all good men who believe in God to obtain the punishment of the assassins, brigands, and disturbers of public tranquillity, and to read the instructions he had received from the government to this effect publicly. Notwithstanding this, on the twentieth of January, 1816, when the service in commemoration of the death of Louis XVI was celebrated, a procession being formed, the National Guards fired at the white flag suspended from the windows of the Protestants, and concluded the day by plundering their houses.

In the commune of Anguargues, matters were still worse; and in that of Fontanes, from the entry of the king in 1815, the Catholics broke all terms with the Protestants; by day they insulted them, and in the night broke open their doors, or marked them with chalk to be plundered or burnt. St. Mamert was repeatedly visited by these robberies; and at Montmiral, as lately as the sixteenth of June, 1816, the Protestants were attacked, beaten, and imprisoned, for daring to celebrate the return of a king who had sworn to preserve religious liberty and to maintain the charter.

Further Account of the Proceedings of the Catholics at Nismes

The excesses perpetrated in the country it seems did not by any means divert the attention of the persecutors from Nismes. October, 1815, commenced without any improvement in the principles or measures of the government, and this was followed by corresponding presumption on the part of the people. Several houses in the Quartier St. Charles were sacked, and their wrecks burnt in the streets amidst songs, dances, and shouts of Vive le Roi! The mayor appeared, but the merry multitude pretended not to know him, and when he ventured to remonstrate, they told him, 'his presence was unnecessary, and that he might retire.' During the sixteenth of October, every preparation seemed to announce a night of carnage; orders for assembling and signals for attack were circulated with regularity and confidence; Trestaillon reviewed his satellites, and urged them on to the perpetration of crimes, holding with one of those wretches the following dialogue:

Satellite. "If all the Protestants, without one exception, are to be killed, I will cheerfully join; but as you have so often deceived me, unless they are all to go I will not stir."

Trestaillon. "Come along, then, for this time not a single man shall escape."

This horrid purpose would have been executed had it not been for General La Garde, the commandant of the department. It was not until ten o'clock at night that he perceived the danger; he now felt that not a moment could be lost. Crowds were advancing through the suburbs, and the streets were filling with ruffians, uttering the most horrid imprecations. The generale sounded at eleven o'clock, and added to the confusion that was now spreading through the city. A few troops rallied round the Count La Garde, who was wrung with distress at the sight of the evil which had arrived at such a pitch. Of this M. Durand, a Catholic advocate, gave the following account:

"It was near midnight, my wife had just fallen asleep; I was writing by her side, when we were disturbed by a distant noise; drums seemed crossing the town in every direction. What could all this mean! To quiet her alarm, I said it probably announced the arrival or departure of some troops of the garrison. But firing and shouts were immediately audible; and on opening my window I distinguished horrible imprecations mingled with cries of Vive le Roi! I roused an officer who lodged in the house, and M. Chancel, Director of the Public Works. We went out together, and gained the Boulevarde. The moon shone bright, and almost every object was nearly as distinct as day; a furious crowd was pressing on vowing extermination, and the greater part half naked, armed with knives, muskets, sticks, and sabers. In answer to my inquiries I was told the massacre was general, that many had been already killed in the suburbs. M. Chancel retired to put on his uniform as captain of the Pompiers; the officers retired to the barracks, and anxious for my wife I returned home. By the noise I was convinced that persons followed. I crept along in the shadow of the wall, opened my door, entered, and closed it, leaving a small aperture through which I could watch the movements of the party whose arms shone in the moonlight. In a few moments some armed men appeared conducting a prisoner to the very spot where I was concealed. They stopped, I shut my door gently, and mounted on an alder tree planted against the garden wall. What a scene! a man on his knees imporing mercy from wretches who mocked his agony, and loaded him with abuse. 'In the name of my wife and children,' he said, 'spare me! What have I done? Why would you murder me for nothing?' I was on the point of crying out and menacing the murderers with vengeance. I had not long to deliberate, the discharge of several fusils terminated my suspense; the unhappy supplicant, struck in the loins and the head, fell to rise no more. The backs of the assassins were towards the tree; they retired immediately, reloading their pieces. I descended and approached the dying man, uttering some deep and dismal groans. Some national guards arrived at the moment, and I again retired and shut the door. 'I see,' said one, 'a dead man.' 'He sings still,' said another. 'It will be better,' said a third, 'to finish him and put him out of his misery.' Five or six muskets were fired instantly, and the groans ceased. On the following day crowds came to inspect and insult the deceased. A day after a massacre was always observed as a sort of fete, and every occupation was left to go and gaze upon the victims." This was Louis Lichare, the father

of four children; and four years after the event, M. Durand verified this account by his oath upon the trial of one of the murderers.

Attack Upon the Protestant Churches

Some time before the death of General La Garde, the duke d'Angouleme had visited Nismes, and other cities in the south, and at the former place honored the members of the Protestant consistory with an interview, promising them protection, and encouraging them to re-open their temple so long shut up. They have two churches at Nismes, and it was agreed that the small one should be preferred on this occasion, and that the ringing of the bell should be omitted, General La Garde declared that he would answer with his head for the safety of his congregation. The Protestants privately informed each other that worship was once more to be celebrated at ten o'clock, and they began to assemble silently and cautiously. It was agreed that M. Juillerat Chasseur should perform the service, though such was his conviction of danger that he entreated his wife, and some of his flock, to remain with their families. The temple being opened only as a matter of form, and in compliance with the orders of the duke d'Angouleme, this pastor wished to be the only victim. On his way to the place he passed numerous groups who regarded him with ferocious looks. "This is the time," said some, "to give them the last blow." "Yes," added others, "and neither women nor children must be spared." One wretch, raising his voice above the rest, exclaimed, "Ah, I will go and get my musket, and ten for my share." Through these ominous sounds M. Juillerat pursued his course, but when he gained the temple the sexton had not the courage to open the door, and he was obliged to do it himself. As the worshippers arrived they found strange persons in possession of the adjacent streets, and upon the steps of the church, vowing their worship should not be performed, and crying, "Down with the Protestants! kill them! kill them!" At ten o'clock the church being nearly filled, M.J. Chasseur commenced the prayers; a calm that succeeded was of short duration. On a sudden the minister was interrupted by a violent noise, and a number of persons entered, uttering the most dreadful cries, mingled with Vive le Roi! but the gendarmed succeeded in excluding these fanatics, and closing the doors. The noise and tumult without now redoubled, and the blows of the populace trying to break open the doors, caused the house to resound with shrieks and groans. The voice of the pastors who endeavored to console their flock, was inaudible; they attempted in vain to sing the Forty-second Psalm.

Three quarters of an hour rolled heavily away. "I placed myself," said Madame Juillerat, "at the bottom of the pulpit, with my daughter in my arms; my husband at length joined and sustained me; I remembered that it was the anniversary of my marriage. After six years of happiness, I said, I am about to die with my husband and my daughter; we shall be slain at the altar of our God, the victims of a sacred duty, and heaven will open to receive us and our unhappy brethren. I blessed the Redeemer, and without cursing our murderers, I awaited their approach."

M. Oliver, son of a pastor, an officer in the royal troops of the line, attempted to leave the church, but the friendly sentinels at the door advised him to remain besieged with the rest. The national guards refused to act, and the fanatical crowd took every advantage of

the absence of General La Garde, and of their increasing numbers. At length the sound of martial music was heard, and voices from without called to the besieged, "Open, open, and save yourselves!" Their first impression was a fear of treachery, but they were soon assured that a detachment returning from Mass was drawn up in front of the church to favor the retreat of the Protestants. The door was opened, and many of them escaped among the ranks of the soldiers, who had driven the mob before them; but this street, as well as others through which the fugitives had to pass, was soon filled again. The venerable pastor, Olivier Desmond, between seventy and eighty years of age, was surrounded by murderers; they put their fists in his face, and cried, "Kill the chief of brigands." He was preserved by the firmness of some officers, among whom was his own son; they made a bulwark round him with their bodies, and amidst their naked sabers conducted him to his house. M. Juillerat, who had assisted at divine service with his wife at his side and his child in his arms, was pursued and assailed with stones, his mother received a blow on the head, and her life was some time in danger. One woman was shamefully whipped, and several wounded and dragged along the streets; the number of Protestants more or less ill treated on this occasion amounted to between seventy and eighty.

Murder of General La Garde

At length a check was put to these excesses by the report of the murder of Count LaGarde, who, receiving an account of this tumult, mounted his horse, and entered one of the streets, to disperse a crowd. A villain seized his bridle; another presented the muzzle of a pistol close to his body, and exclaimed, "Wretch, you make me retire!" He immediately fired. The murderer was Louis Boissin, a sergeant in the national guard; but, though known to everyone, no person endeavored to arrest him, and he effected his escape. As soon as the general found himself wounded, he gave orders to the gendarmerie to protect the Protestants, and set off on a gallop to his hotel; but fainted immediately on his arrival. On recovering, he prevented the surgeon from searching his wound until he had written a letter to the government, that, in case of his death, it might be known from what quarter the blow came, and that none might dare to accuse the Protestants of the crime.

The probable death of this general produced a small degree of relaxation on the part of their enemies, and some calm; but the mass of the people had been indulged in licentiousness too long to be restrained even by the murder of the representative of their king. In the evening they again repaired to the temple, and with hatchets broke open the door; the dismal noise of their blows carried terror into the bosom of the Protestant families sitting in their houses in tears. The contents of the poor box, and the clothes prepared for distribution, were stolen; the minister's robes rent in pieces; the books torn up or carried away; the closets were ransacked, but the rooms which contained the archives of the church, and the synods, were providentially secured; and had it not been for the numerous patrols on foot, the whole would have become the prey of the flames, and the edifice itself a heap of ruins. In the meanwhile, the fanatics openly ascribed the murder of the general to his own self-devotion, and said, 'that iw as the will of God.' Three thousand francs were offered for the apprehension of Boissin; but it was well

known that the Protestants dared not arrest him, and that the fanatics would not. During these transactions, the system of forced conversions to Catholicism was making regular and fearful progress.

Interference of the British Government

To the credit of England, the report of these cruel persecutions carried on against our Protestant brethren in France, produced such a sensation on the part of the government as determined them to interfere; and now the persecutors of the Protestants made this spontaneous act of humanity and religion the pretext for charging the sufferers with a treasonable correspondence with England; but in this state of their proceedings, to their great dismay, a letter appeared, sent some time before to England by the duke of Wellington, stating that 'much information existed on the events of the south.'

The ministers of the three denominations in London, anxious not to be misled, requested one of their brethren to visit the scenes of persecution, and examine with impartiality the nature and extent of the evils they were desirous to relieve. Rev. Clement Perot undertook this difficult task, and fulfilled their wishes with a zeal, prudence, and devotedness, above all praise. His return furnished abundant and incontestable proof of a shameful persecution, materials for an appeal to the British Parliament, and a printed report which was circulated through the continent, and which first conveyed correct information to the inhabitants of France.

Foreign interference was now found eminently useful; and the declarations of tolerance which it elicited from the French government, as well as the more cautious march of the Catholic persecutors, operated as decisive and involuntary acknowledgments of the importance of that interference, which some persons at first censured and despised, put through the stern voice of public opinion in England and elsewhere produced a resultant suspension of massacre and pillage, the murderers and plunderers were still left unpunished, and even caressed and rewarded for their crimes; and whilst Protestants in France suffered the most cruel and degrading pains and penalties for alleged trifling crimes, Catholics, covered with blood, and guilty of numerous and horrid murders, were acquitted.

Perhaps the virtuous indignation expressed by some of the more enlightened Catholics against these abominable proceedings, had no small share in restraining them. Many innocent Protestants had been condemned to the galleys and otherwise punished for supposed crimes, upon the oaths of wretches the most unprincipled and abandoned. M. Madier de Mongau, judge of the cour royale of Nismes, and president of the cour d'assizes of the Gard and Vaucluse, upon one occasion felt himself compelled to break up the court, rather than take the deposition of that notorious and sanguinary monster, Truphemy: "In a hall," says he, "of the Palace of Justice, opposite that in which I sat, several unfortunate persons persecuted by the faction were upon trial, every deposition tending to their crimination was applauded with the cries of Vive le Roi! Three times the explosion of this atrocious joy became so terrible that it was necessary to send for reinforcements from the barracks, and two hundred soldiers were often unable to restrain

the people. On a sudden the shouts and cries of Vive le Roi! redoubled: a man arrived, caressed, applauded, borne in triumph-it was the horrible Truphemy; he approached the tribunal-he came to depose against the prisoners-he was admitted as a witness-he raised his hand to take the oath! Seized with horror at the sight, I rushed from my seat, and entered the hall of council; my colleagues followed me; in vain they persuaded me to resume my seat; 'No!' exclaimed I, 'I will not consent to see that wretch admitted to give evidence in a court of justice in the city which he has filled with murders; in the palace, on the steps of which he has murdered the unfortunate Bourillon. I cannot admit that he should kill his victims by his testimonies no more than by his poignards. He an accuser! he a witness! No, never will I consent to see this monster rise, in the presence of magistrates, to take a sacrilegious oath, his hand still reeking with blood.' These words were repeated out of doors; the witness trembled; the factious also trembled; the factious who guided the tongue of Truphemy as they had directed his arm, who dictated calumny after they had taught him murder. These words penetrated the dungeons of the condemned, and inspired hope; they gave another courageous advocate the resolution to espouse the cause of the persecuted; he carried the prayers of innocence and misery to the foot of the throne; there he asked if the evidence of a Truphemy was not sufficient to annul a sentence. The king granted a full and free pardon."

Ultimate Resolution of the Proestants at Nismes

With respect to the conduct of the Protestants, these highly outraged citizens, pushed to extremities by their persecutors, felt at length that they had only to choose the manner in which they were to perish. They unanimously determined that they would die fighting in their own defense. This firm attitude apprised their butchers that they could no longer murder with impunity. Everything was immediately changed. Those, who for four years had filled others with terror, now felt it in their turn. They trembled at the force which men, so long resigned, found in despair, and their alarm was heightened when they heard that the inhabitants of the Cevennes, persuaded of the danger of their brethren, were marching to their assistance. But, without waiting for these reinforcements, the Protestants appeared at night in the same order and armed in the same manner as their enemies. The others paraded the Boulevards, with their usual noise and fury, but the Protestants remained silent and firm in the posts they had chosen. Three days these dangerous and ominous meetings continued; but the effusion of blood was prevented by the efforts of some worthy citizens distinguished by their rank and fortune. By sharing the dangers of the Protestant population, they obtained the pardon of an enemy who now trembled while he menaced.