

Our poet was better inspired by the League and the Leaguers, although they are far from being perfect. Mayenne, the chief of the League, says nothing, does nothing. D'Amable, who is presented as a hero, only leaves the ranks of the other leaguers to be killed by Turenne, who appears only in that single fight. Some parts, it is true, atone for those weak points. The character of Jacques Clément, for instance, is well drawn. The portrait of Henry de Guise, the tyranny of the sixteen, the fanatical sermons of the monks, the relation of Saint Bartholomew, in which we find the death of Coligny, the death of Henri the Third, the horrors of famine in Paris, the episode of the mother eating her child, all those pieces, very much admired formerly, are still worth reading.

Voltaire, not so highly inspired as Lucan in his "*Pharsalia*" thought he should use the marvellous in an action entirely performed by human beings, the particulars and the authors of which we know authentically. "Such a marvellous as this," says Paul Albert, an excellent critic, "is not only cold and false, it is visibly useless." We may overlook the apparition of Saint Louis, but what can be thought of these supernatural, symbolical beings, Discord, Policy, Fanaticism; and as if it were not enough with those allegories and Christian saints, we have to deal with Cupid and his rusty quiver. Moreover, Saint Louis, who has the charge of converting Henri to Roman Catholicism, confesses that what Rome praises, God, more severe and just, sometimes disavows,—a sentence which would do very well in the mouth of a Protestant, but not of a man canonized by the Roman Church.

"Ce que Rome loue
Dieu, plus sévère et plus juste, quelquefois le désavoue."

To finish with that matter, Saint Louis sends the archangel, Saint Michael, to warn Mornay to struggle against Cupid. This ridiculous farrago is what the great Frederic calls "a machinery which cannot shock any sensible reader." As I said before, the Palace of Destiny, as in the *Eneid*, contains the souls of those who are to exist in the future, but the imitation is very poor. The episode of Marcellus suggests finer inspiration to Voltaire. He laments, in touching verses, the death of the "Duc de Bourgogne" the pupil of Fénélon, and the grand-son of Louis XVI., prematurely carried away by death, like his father, and whose reign gave rise to great hopes, as the following lines prove:—