

wrote to the Duc de Noailles, "The soldiers are killing numbers of the fanatics—they hope soon to free Languedoc of them."

That piquante letter-writer, Madame Sévigné, often referred to the Huguenots. She seems to have classed them with criminals or wild beasts. When residing in Low Brittany during a revolt against the Jabelle, a friend wrote to her, "How dull you must be!" "No," replied Madame de Sévigné, "we are not so dull—hanging is quite a refreshment to me! They have just taken twenty-four or thirty of these men, and are going to throw them off."

A few days after the Edict had been revoked, she wrote to her cousin Bussy, at Paris: "You have doubtless seen the Edict by which the King revokes that of Nantes. There is nothing so fine as that which it contains, and never has any King done, or ever will do, a more memorable act." Bussy replied to her: "I immensely admire the conduct of the King in destroying the Huguenots. The wars which have been waged against them, and the St. Bartholomew, have given some reputation to the sect. His Majesty has gradually undermined it; and the edict he has just published, maintained by the dragoons and by Bourdaloue,* will soon give them the coup de grace."

In a future letter to Count Bussy, Madame de Sévigné informed him of "a dreadfully fatiguing journey which her son-in-law, M. de Grignan, had made in the mountains of Dauphiny, to pursue and punish the miserable Huguenots, who issued from their holes, and vanished like ghosts to avoid extermination."

De Baille, however, the Lieutenant of Languedoc, kept her in good heart. In one of his letters, he said, "I have this morning condemned seventy-six of these wretches (Huguenots), and sent them to the galleys." All this was very pleasant to Madame de Sévigné.

Madame de Scuderi, also, more moderately rejoiced in the Act of Revocation. "The King," she wrote to Bussy, "has worked great marvels against the Huguenots; and the authority which he has employed to unite them to the Church will be most salutary to themselves and to their children, who will be educated in the purity of the faith; all this will bring upon him the benedictions of Heaven."

Even the French Academy, though originally founded by a Huguenot, publicly approved the deed of Revocation. In a discourse uttered before it, the Abbé Tallemand exclaimed, when speaking of the Huguenot temple at Charenton, which had

just been destroyed by the mob, "Happy ruins, the finest trophy France ever beheld!" La Fontaine described heresy as now "reduced to the last gasp." Thomas Corneille also eulogized the zeal of the King in "throttling the Reformation." Barbier D'Aucourt heedlessly, but truly, compared the emigration of the Protestants to "the departure of the Israelites from Egypt." The Academy afterwards proposed, as the subject of a poem, the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and Fontenelle had the fortune, good or bad, of winning the prize.

The philosophic La Bruyère contributed a maxim in praise of the Revocation. Quinault wrote a poem on the subject; and Madame Deshoulières felt inspired to sing "The Destruction of Heresy." The Abbé de Rancé spoke of the whole affair as a prodigy: "The Temple of Charenton destroyed, and no exercise of Protestantism within the kingdom; it is a kind of miracle, such as we had never hoped to have seen in our day."

The Revocation was popular with the lower class, who went about sacking and pulling down the Protestant churches. They also tracked the Huguenots and their pastors, where they found them evading or breaking the Edict of Revocation; thus earning the praises of the Church and the fines offered by the King for their apprehension. The provosts and sheriffs of Paris represented the popular feeling, by erecting a brazen statue of the King who had rooted out heresy; and they struck and distributed medals in honor of the great event.

The Revocation was also popular with the dragoons. In order to "convert" the Protestants, the dragoons were unduly billeted upon them. As both officers and soldiers were then very badly paid, they were thereby enabled to live at free quarters. They treated everything in the houses they occupied as if it were their own, and an assignment of billets was little less than the consignment of the premises to the military, to use for their own purposes, during the time they occupied them.*

The Revocation was also approved by those who wished to buy land cheap. As the Huguenots were prevented holding their estates unless they conformed to the Catholic religion, and as many estates were accordingly confiscated and sold, land speculators, as well as grand seigneurs who wished to increase their estates, were constantly on the look-out for good bargains. Even before the Revocation, when the Huguenots were selling their land in order to leave the country, Madame de Maintenon wrote to her nephew, for whom she had obtained from the King a grant of

* Bourdaloue had just been sent from the Jesuit Church of St. Louis at Paris, to Montpellier, to aid the dragoons in converting the Protestants, and bringing them back to the Church.

* Sir John Reesby's Travels and Memoirs.