

Ernest

# THE COLONIAL CHURCHMAN.

"BUILT UPON THE FOUNDATION OF THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS, JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF BEING THE CHIEF CORNER STONE."

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## MASSACRE OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S DAY AT PARIS.— A. D. 1572.\*

The king, it is stated, speedily felt the most violent remorse for permitting the massacre. From the evening of the 24th Aug. he was observed to groan much when informed of the cruelties that had been perpetrated; and at length, after some conversation with Ambrose Pare, his surgeon and a Huguenot, he repented the continuance of the deed of blood. He endeavored to exculpate himself; for in letters sent by him to the provinces, he threw the blame of the whole proceeding on the members of the house of Guise. In eight days he changed his tone, declaring that the whole affair took place by his express command. He was certain that he was himself seen with a carriage in his hand during the massacre, which he is said to have fired on the Huguenots. It is not less true that he went with his court to view the body of Coligny while suspended at Montfaucon; and that one of his courtiers observed that it smelt ill. He replied, 'The dead body of a dead enemy always smells well.' The number of Protestants massacred in eight days, over the kingdom, amounted to 100,000.

The last ferocious act of Charles, which grew immediately out of the St. Bartholomew, says Mr. Smeley, 'was a mock trial, instituted against the admiral and his adherents in the pretended conspiracy. The sentence passed against Coligny, traitor, involved confiscation of all his property, eternal infamy, and the suppression of his name. His effigy, if it could be found (and if that were not the case, his effigy), was to be drawn on a hurdle through the streets, and gibbeted, first in the Place de la Bastille for six hours, afterwards on a loftier spot at Montfaucon. His armorial bearings were to be trampled at a horse's tail through every town in which he might have by the common executioner; his busts, and portraits, were to be demolished in the same manner. His chief seat at Chatillon was to be thrown to the ground; no building was ever again to be founded on its site; the trees in the park were to be cut down to half their natural height; the glebe was to be sown with salt; and in some central spot a column was to be erected, bearing on it this deed engraved in brass. His children had escaped the hands of the king during the massacre; but they were proscribed, degraded from their nobility, and incapable of being witnesses in courts of law. They were stripped of all civil privileges, and the power of holding any public office, or of enjoying any property within the limits of France for ever. An annual religious service and procession was at the same time instituted, to commemorate the mercy of God which had so signally averted calamity from the kingdom on the festival of St. Bartholomew.

It was not, however, on the dead only that the vengeance of the court was content to wreak itself. The Church of England Magazine.

in these moments of subsidence. Two living victims also were provided for sacrifice. Cavagne, a counsellor of the parliament of Toulouse, and Briquemaut who at seventy years of age had retired from the profession of arms, in which he had long served with honour, were arrested as Huguenots a short time after the massacre. The escape of Briquemaut during the Parisian carnage was attended with remarkable circumstances. Perceiving that every outlet was blockaded, and that the murderers were in close pursuit, he stripped off his clothes, and throwing himself among a heap of bleeding corpses, lay upon his face and counterfeited death. His nakedness prevented examination and discovery by the wretches who followed in the train of the assassins to rifle their fallen victims; and at night, wrapping round him such rags as were near at hand, he stole away unobserved, and took refuge at the house of the English ambassador. There he found employment in the stables; and he was dressing a horse at the moment in which he was recognised and arrested.

The charge brought against him and Cavagne, was participation in the admiral's conspiracy; with the exception, therefore, of the merely personal clauses, their sentence was similar to that which we have just recited; and De Thou, who heard it read to them, notices the fortitude with which Briquemaut listened—notwithstanding the usual ignominy with which one nobly born was adjudged to the gallows—till he found that in some of the penalties his children also were included. 'What have they done to merit this severity?' was the inquiry of the heart-broken veteran. Between five and six in the evening of the 27th of October, the sad procession quitted the Conciergerie for the Place de Greve. In the mouth of the straw effigy, by which the admiral was represented, some heartless mocker had placed a toothpick, to increase the resemblance by imitating one of his common habits. At the windows of the Hotel de Ville, which commanded a near view of the scaffold, were assembled Charles (to whom his consort on that morning had presented her first-born child), the queen mother, and the King of Navarre, who had been compelled to attend. A considerable delay took place; and some proposal appears to have been made, by which, even at the last moment, the condemned might have purchased their lives, if they would have debased themselves by treachery and falsehood. When at length the hangman had thrown them from the ladder, Charles ordered flags to be held close to their faces, in order that he might distinctly view the variety of expressions which each exhibited in his parting agony. Suetonius does not record a more fiend-like anecdote of the worst of the Casars. The populace imitated the brutality of their sovereign. During the long and fearful pause which had occurred on the scaffold, and the many hours through which the bound and defenceless prisoners endured that lingering expectation far more bitter than death itself, their suffering

was heightened by cruel outrages inflicted by the rabble; who, when life was extinct, dragged the bodies from the gallows, and savagely tore them in pieces.

Sir Francis Walsingham was at this time the resident ambassador from England. His interview with Catherine after the massacre was truly interesting. He concealed not the disgust which would be felt by his royal mistress, Elizabeth, at such outrages; and his despatches notice the brutal sportiveness with which the Parisians spoke of them as 'a Bartholomew breakfast, and a Florence banquet.' The detestation in which the name of the French court was held in England, is thus described in a strain of rude, yet powerful eloquence, by his friend and correspondent, Sir Thomas Smith, the queen's secretary:—

'What warrant can the French make now, seals and words of princes being traps to catch innocents and bring them to butchery? If the admiral and all those murdered on that bloody Bartholomew-day were guilty, why were they not apprehended, imprisoned, interrogated, and judged? But so much made of as might be, within two hours of the assassination! Is that the manner to handle men, either culpable or suspected? So is the journeyer slain by the robber; so is the hen of the fox; so the hind of the lion; so Abel of Cain; so the innocent of the wicked; so Abner of Joab. But grant they were guilty, they dreamed treason that night in their sleep; what did the innocent men, women, and children do at Lyons? What did the sucking children and their mothers at Rouen deserve? at Caen, at Rochelle? What is done yet, we have not heard; but I think shortly we shall hear. Will God, think you, still sleep? Will not their blood ask vengeance? Shall not the earth be accursed that hath sucked up the innocent blood poured out like water upon it?'

In the general dispersion which succeeded these massacres, the Huguenots took refuge in England, in the Palatinate, and a part of them in Switzerland. A remnant, however, still remained behind.

When intelligence of the massacre, adds Mr. Smeley, 'was first announced at Rome, the Vatican gave loose to unbounded joy. The pope and cardinals proceeded at once from the conclave in which the king's despatches had been read, to offer thanks before the altar, for the great blessing which Heaven had vouchsafed to the Romish see and to all Christendom. Salvoes of artillery thundered at nightfall from the ramparts of St. Angelo; the streets were illuminated; and no victory ever achieved by the arms of the pontificate elicited more tokens of festivity. The pope also, as if resolved that an indestructible evidence of the perversion of moral feeling which fanaticism necessarily generates should be transmitted to posterity, gave orders for the execution of a commemorative medal. He had already been anticipated in Paris; and the effigies of Gregory XIII. and of Charles IX. may still be seen

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