

while in the sun they were poisoned by exhalations from the swamps around, which still decimate the inhabitants of a town that well merits the name of *Aigues-Mortes*.

The lower of the two large rooms has been cleansed and repaired, so that, on entering, the intelligent visitor is moved not so much by the moulding of the stones and the arches, as by the thought of those heroic Cevenols and those brave women who spent almost their whole lives within these walls the victims of the cruel intolerance of the age in which they lived. True, all traces of the names of those heroines—Isabeau Menet and Marie Durand, so celebrated in many a Huguenot story—have been obliterated by modern improvement; but their correspondence with Paul Rabaut, and other pastors of the "desert," remains to testify to their high thoughts and noble bearing, and to supply suggestive matter to every thoughtful reader.

THE DOCTRINES OF THE REFORMATION

found their way into this remote town as early as 1560, and the Tower of Constance was not long in receiving its first martyrs. Pierre Daise, Governor of Aigues-Mortes, had embraced the new faith, and authorized an evangelical pastor—Helie du Bosquet—to preach in the adjoining chateau. Noted of the fact, Count Villars, President of the States of Languedoc, called the Governor to Beaucaire and kept him a prisoner. Meantime he despatched troops to the town—still ignorant of the fate of its Governor—who seized Helie du Bosquet and his adherents, and threw them into prison. Villars soon arrived with his Provost, who ordered punishment to be inflicted, and the prisoners, confessors of the reformed faith, were hanged. The wife and children of the pastor were present at the execution. His body was left exposed several days to the insults of the fanatical population. Such, briefly, is the story told by the ecclesiastical historian, Theodore de Beza.

Villars wrote to the king that "with the help of God he had despatched the guilty, and that he was going to the mountains of the Cevennes there to fight a large number of the *canaille* who had taken refuge in their recesses."

DAISSE, ESCAPING FROM CAPTIVITY

two years after, accompanied Captain Grille, who seriously threatened Aigues-Mortes, after having taken the Tower of Carboumbre. A diversion saved the town, and in 1564 Catherine de Medicis visited it accompanied by her son, Charles IX. War has its vicissitudes and revolutions, so that what Daise and Grille were unable to effect in 1562, Gremian did in 1574. This Huguenot captain seized the town with the aid of Saint-Romain and his soldiers. The churches were sacked and the Tower of Constance, in which some rich inhabitants of Montpellier had found refuge, was taken after a two days' siege, and the inmates released for a ransom. During forty-eight years (1574-1622) the tower was regarded as a place of safety for Protestants; at least it remained in the hands of Protestant Governors and a Protestant garrison.

LOUIS XI.

then entered Aigues-Mortes, and placed his soldiers in possession, so that thereafter Protestants were only to know the Tower of Constance as a prison. In 1686 there were many shut up in it, of whom Antoine Court says: "They were abandoned by all, given up a prey to vermin, deprived of clothes, resembling skeletons, making it difficult to believe they were not dead." In 1693, at the close of a meeting near Brignon, forty persons were made prisoners, some of whom were sent to the galleys and others to the tower. Some years later, Abraham Mazel—a Camisard chief—on entering found here thirty-three companions in misfortune; and planned and executed

A WONDERFUL ESCAPE

for himself and sixteen others who alone had the courage to take advantage of it, on the 27th of July, 1705. At the side of one of the loop-holes, overlooking the ramparts, was a large stone, which, after eight months' labour, he succeeded in removing from its place. While some were occupied at this work, others stood at the opening singing psalms in order to deceive the gaoler. In this way the hardy Cevenols at last not only removed the block of sandstone from its position, but also an iron bar which narrowed the loop-hole; and, by the aid of their bed-clothes, descended a distance of some seventy feet. They had then to scale high walls, to dodge sentinels and finally to traverse many swamps with none to offer food or lodg-

ing until they reached their hells once more. The stone, I may say, has long ago been replaced in its original position, and is always pointed out to visitors as one of the sights of the tower.

A TOUCHING SCENE

Another incident, less heroic, perhaps, but more touching, took place here according to the chroniclers: A young girl of noble extraction—Suzanne de Fontanes—had been shut up along with three of her companions, all belonging to the best families. The mother of young Suzanne, overwhelmed with grief, wished, at all risks, to see her child, or at least once more to hear the accents of her loved voice. Clad as a beggar, and accompanied by a second daughter, she made the journey from Anduze to Aigues-Mortes on foot. Arrived at the tower these two women began to sing a psalm. Soop from behind the walls deeply affecting voices replied. When the song had ceased the mother of the young captive, sure of being heard, called out. "Suzanne! Suzanne!" At these words the daughter recognized the voice, and cried through the opening: "My mother! my mother!" Then a furtive look is exchanged through the loop-hole. It was the last.

From 1717 to 1769, this tower was reserved for the detention of

PROTESTANT WOMEN ALONE.

The number of inmates varied from time to time. In 1763 there were twenty-two; in 1745 there were thirty-three; in 1750 the number was again twenty-two. In 1763 it had risen to twenty-five; and in 1767, on the eve of their deliverance, there remained but fourteen. Their treatment, also, underwent many changes. Sometimes water was measured out in scanty quantities in the heat of summer; at other times wood to cook their food was withheld. On the other hand they seem to have had perfect liberty to correspond with friends outside, for they were conversant with what was going on in the churches and at court. They received letters, clothes, money and sometimes even visits. Still, a prison remains a prison, however many indulgences may be granted. Many died within the walls. Isabeau Menet returned to her friends in 1750, after thirteen years' confinement, insane. Many, however, remained thirty, forty and even forty-four years within these walls. Some had been brought in when very young, and some were even born there; others again were made captives at a very advanced age.

There is not a complete list of female prisoners, the names of only sixty-one being found; but it is said that this is not half the number of those who were imprisoned here on account of their faith; while there were some twenty other places in France in which women were shut up, such as Carcassone, also a most picturesque old town in the South which I have seen. Of all these, the one who has received the most renown is

MARIE DURAND,

an intelligent, warm-hearted and energetic girl, who was shut up because her brother was a pastor who afterward suffered martyrdom. She was imprisoned in 1730 and released in 1768. She had been engaged to a young man who, in consequence, was also detained, and, after twenty years' confinement, was released only to be banished from Languedoc. Her father, also, was imprisoned in Fort Brescon. Her name is still a household word in every Huguenot family. Her correspondence with Paul Rabaut, the well-known "desert" preacher, has been preserved, and was recently published by the Protestant Society of Toulouse. I have read it with much interest and marked many passages for quotation, which bear a striking resemblance to the teaching of the New Testament on the subject of the sufferings and trials of the Christian. Space permits but this short extract: "God judges fit to afflict us by giving us many parts to take; it is an effect of His love, since He chastises with greater severity those whom He loves with the greatest tenderness."

As the eighteenth century advanced, the

SPIRIT OF TOLERATION

began to make itself felt. Whether this arose from the decline of faith, or respect for the constancy of the victims of fanaticism, it is needless to say. What is more important is that it prepared the way for reform in the laws and greater liberty of conscience. In 1769 the Tower of Constance delivered up its last "prisoner for the faith," and henceforth received only

sight-seers who were at liberty to leave when they chose. Before quitting those gloomy rooms, let us look at least at one inscription which remains traced in the middle of the upper room upon the margin of a round hole which was made to communicate with the room beneath. Its orthography *Recister*—and style of execution are certainly faulty; but from the feminine form of the letters and the thought it expresses, it has been attributed to Marie Durand, and is always quoted as the Motto of the Tower, which gives to its prisoners their historic, heroic and Christian worth. It is the cry of the oppressed conscience, and the watchword of the Christian in all ages. The lesson taught by this device may prove serviceable even in these days, when we are called on, not certainly to resist persecution for conscience' sake, but what is even more likely to lead astray—"the world, the flesh and the devil," the enemies to the Christian's peace and purity while on earth. This word, equivalent to the "I will maintain" of the Dutch, is everywhere regarded as a sacred heritage by all connected with the Reformed Church of France; and has often inspired poetic thoughts. The latest verses I have seen were written by M. Saillens, the energetic and efficient assistant of Mr. McAll, with whose work in France all readers of THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN are familiar. I close my story by quoting three of these, not because they are of a high order of poetry, but to show the reflections which everything about this place suggests to the serious mind:

RESISTEZ.

Non, ce n'est pas ta lourde grille
Ni ton mur noir,
Sombre tour, funebre bastille,
Que j'aime à voir!
Mais ces traits, qui par une femme,
Furent sculptés,
Ce mot que recouvre un long drame:
RESISTEZ.

En ce temps-là, dans son Versailles,
Le Roi riait,
Tandis qu'ici, sons ces murailles,
La loi priait.
L'un écrivait dans une fête:
"Persecutez!"
L'autre écrivait, baissant la tête:
RESISTEZ!

Et c'est toi qui fus la plus forte,
Vaillante Foi!
Depuis long temps la femme est morte
Et mort le Roi,
Mais tandis que sceptre et couronne
Sont emportés,
Dans la Tour ce vieux mot rayonne:
RESISTEZ!

T. H.

Right Daily, Switzerland, September, 1885.

THE WORK IN THE NORTH-WEST.

MR. EDITOR,—Last Sabbath it was my privilege to spend a day at the Whitewood mission. Whitewood is a small but growing village on the C. P. R., 250 miles west of Winnipeg. Here we have an interesting and very encouraging mission field in which Mr. Hugh W. Fraser, one of the divinity students of Manitoba College, has rendered excellent service during this summer. Mr. Fraser has preached at some eight points in connection with the field. He has everywhere been received with gratifying encouragement. Many were the praises of the people in regard to the good work he has been enabled to do this summer. He will return to his studies at the College in two or three weeks more. The people are petitioning to have him sent out once a fortnight to them during winter. It is more than doubtful if this can be granted them and at the same time conserve Mr. Fraser's interests as a student. However, when the matter comes before the proper authorities, I doubt not the destitution of the field and Mr. Fraser's best interests will be wisely weighed and a just conclusion arrived at.

The occasion of my visit was the opening of a comfortable frame church-mansie. I may state that this is an institution of our North-West Mission Field. As may be judged, it is a combination of church and mansie. The first story affords an excellent audience room, which will accommodate a congregation of from 100 to 120, beside it is a lean-to kitchen with folding doors between, so that in case of a large gathering on special occasions, the seating capacity can be considerably increased. Under this kitchen is a capital frost-proof cellar. In the upper story are three comfortable bedrooms with two closets attached. The building is painted outside and inside, even the roof has not