

King (Charles IX.) urging and warning him to destroy the heretics lest God should reject him as he had rejected Saul for sparing the Amalekites. Writing to Catherine of Medici, he urges her to pursue the Protestants "till they are all massacred; for it is only by the entire extermination of the heretics that Catholic worship can be restored."

Such was the teaching that paved the way for the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. The French court was then a sink of foulest iniquity. The contemporary Archbishop of Paris described it as filled with "iniquity, atheism, necromancy, most horrible pollutions, black cowardice, perfidy, poisonings and assassinations." It will at once be seen that the Pope and his underlings could easily influence for evil such a court as this.

A marriage was arranged between Henry of Navarre, subsequently King of France, and Margaret, the reigning King's sister. Henry being a Protestant, the leading Protestants from all the French cities were invited to the wedding. Everything was done to create confidence, and allay suspicion. Coligny especially was feted and petted, and admitted into the closest intercourse with the King and his mother. His suspicions and doubts were completely dispelled. The King (Charles IX.) was weak and changeful, and Coligny gained great influence over him. This alarmed the cruel Queen Mother and the Guises. An attempt was made to assassinate the brave old leader in the streets of Paris, but he escaped severely wounded. On Saturday, the 23rd August, 1572, the plans for the bloody work were completed, the miserable king being, by threats and taunts, led to give his consent. On Sabbath, beginning with the early hours of darkness, the Huguenots of Paris were given up to the full fury of their deadly foes. At two o'clock in the morning—just before the earliest dawn, the bell of St. Germain Auxerrois tolled the signal for the murderers to begin their work. Every church-bell in Paris responded: and the work of slaughter then began,—indescribable, awful, hideous, horrible, enough to make the blood run cold even at this distance of time.

In a few moments five hundred Huguenot leaders, noblemen and gentlemen, were murdered in cold blood under the shadow of the Louvre, where they expected perfect safety. Many were slain in their beds: more fell in the streets. Men, women, children—the grey-haired patriarch, the little infant, the sick, the dying, were sacrificed without mercy. Sixty thousand infuriated murderers, with all sorts of weapons in their hands, rushed hither and thither doing the fiendish work. "Down with the Huguenots! Kill, kill," was the universal cry. The Protestants were flung from windows, trampled under savage feet, dragged through the bloody gutters, pitched into the Seine, torn to pieces, tortured, mangled, made the sport of all the worst passions of infuriated mobs. Under priestly manipulation, a false miracle was performed to excite the people to more bloodshed. For nearly a week the wholesale carnage continued, ever growing worse and worse. Not even the youngest child was willingly left to escape. Infants packed in baskets were flung into the river.

Dr. Hanna, in his admirable volume, "Wars of the Huguenots," thus describes some incidents of the Massacre:—

Upon the streets, there lay together, weltering in their blood, a father and his two sons, apparently all dead. Many as they passed stopped for a moment to gaze upon the group. "'Tis all the better so, they said; it is nothing to kill the wolves, if you do not kill their little ones with them." The bodies lay all still. At last there came a solitary man who, as he stopped and looked, gently raised his hands to heaven, and said in pitiful indignation, "God will avenge that deed!" And then the youngest of the children raised its little head from out its bath of blood, and said, "I am not dead. Take me to the arsenal, and M. de Biron will pay you well. The child that had the singular self-possession to feign itself dead so long, and was thus preserved, was Caumont de la Force, the head of a distinguished family, who lived to do good service afterwards to the Huguenot cause in France.

As little respect was paid to character as to age. Pierre de la Place, a distinguished jurist and historian, had a message sent to him that he was wanted at the Louvre. Suspecting the object, he fled out of his own house, tried the houses of three friends, was repulsed from each, returned to his own